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LIGUORIAN

APRIL, 1967

Are You Becoming
an Alcoholic?

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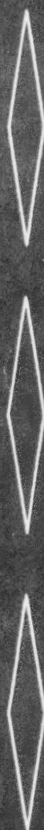
Teen-agers and Religion

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For Parents of
Retarded Children

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Meditation for Lent



YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH,

AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.



THE Liguorian

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Two Dollars per year
Canada & Foreign \$2.25

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Brings Happiness to
Human Beings*

Published Monthly by the Redemptorist Fathers and entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Liguori, Mo., under the act of March 3, 1879. - Acceptance for mailing at special rates of postage provided for in section 1103, act of October 3, 1917. Authorized July 17, 1918. Published with ecclesiastical approval.



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VOLUME 45

NUMBER 4

THE LIGUORIAN IS INDEXED
IN THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX

THE LIGUORIAN

LIGUORI, MO.

ARE YOU BECOMING AN ALCOHOLIC

?

Ten signs which, taken together or singly, show that you are already doing great harm to yourself, and, unless you take action against them now, may soon lead you into the desolate land of alcoholism.

THIS is not being written for confirmed alcoholics. A confirmed alcoholic is a person who at regular intervals drinks to a point of sodden drunkenness; who has such a compulsion for drinking that only the most extraordinary scientific and psychological measures, together with a near-miracle of God's grace, can keep him (or her) away from excessive drinking; or one who cannot touch a drop of any alcoholic beverage without being driven on to take so much that it blots out consciousness.

Alcoholics Anonymous and temperance organizations have done and are doing marvellous work in re-

DONALD F. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

habilitating confirmed alcoholics. We are not concerned here with that phase of this problem. We are concerned rather with those drinkers who are not as yet out-and-out alcoholics; who still have some real ability to control or stop their drinking; but who show signs that, if they do nothing about their present drinking habits, they will soon be among the tragic, forlorn, miserable millions of real alcoholics in America.

While it has been proved that, in some cases, an individual is so constituted that almost his first taste of alcoholic beverages drives him into alcoholism, it is a fact that most alcoholics become such after a long or short period of more-or-less temperate drinking.

For these, there is a threefold stage in the descent into alcoholism: 1) there is the time when they rarely

drink, and never drink intemperately; 2) there is the time when they have permitted themselves to become dependent on alcohol in any one of many ways, though as yet they are not drunkards; 3) there is the time when their dependence on alcohol has become a compulsion, so that they cannot leave it alone and cannot drink with moderation.

THE second stage is the important one to recognize and take action about. In that stage there is still hope; there is still the ability to reverse the trend of one's habits with the help of sincere self-examination, proper motivation, and the grace of God.

The key word that describes the second stage is "dependence." Temperance, in regard to alcohol, is the virtue by which a person is able to drink with moderation, and without any real dependence on alcohol. A temperate man can take liquor or leave it alone, and this, for him, is not merely a matter of words (almost every alcoholic says: "I can leave it alone if I want to,") but as a matter of fact, he proves it by not indulging in alcoholic beverages for long or short intervals, and when he does indulge, it is always in careful moderation.

The question, then, that a person in danger of alcoholism must ask of himself is this: "Am I becoming *dependent* on alcohol in any sense of the word?" We here present the signs of such dependence, and we ask every reader who has any doubt at all about whether he is temperate in

drinking, or in danger of alcoholism, to read them carefully and apply them to himself.

The presence of any one of these signs in an individual is a bad sign, and an evidence that contrary action should be taken now, at once. The presence of three or four or five of the signs is evidence that dependence on alcohol is pretty far advanced, and far more violent contrary action is called for. The presence of practically all the signs in an individual indicates that alcoholism is not far off, and that the person so described should, while there is yet time and hope, give up drinking altogether. The ten signs are these, with comment on each.

1.

If there is liquor available, or you have money with which to buy it, you cannot get through many hours of a day without drinking.

If the very availability of liquor creates in you a thirst, a yearning, an attraction that you never resist for more than several hours in a day, you have already become quite dependent on alcohol, even though at each bout with the bottle you do not drink to great excess.

The next inevitable step here will be to make certain that liquor is always available at any cost to yourself or others, so that you will not have to face the terrible prospect of going without a drink for a whole day. Then gradually the number of drinks will increase, and your family and friends will begin to note the tell-tale effects in your features, your voice and your conduct. Your progress can be only downward.

2.

You have come to feel that you must have several drinks before retiring in order to sleep well.

This does not apply to elderly persons who may have adopted the habit of taking an ounce or so of whiskey or a bottle of beer every night before retiring, but who have made it an absolute principle never to take more.

It does apply to you who feel that you have to make yourself somewhat numb through alcohol in order to get to sleep. Actually, alcohol is a stimulant rather than a sedative. Nevertheless it does sometimes promote sleep by temporarily relieving your worries, frustrations, even conflicts. But the gain is a false one. Gradually more and more alcohol is needed to bring relief from tension (by reducing consciousness); and gradually the pressure of your worries grows greater and greater on each awakening from an alcohol-induced sleep. You are the victim of a terribly dangerous dependence on drink.

3.

You drink alone and secretly often, besides accepting opportunities to drink with others.

"Beware the lone drinker" is an old warning. The lone and secret drinker is often motivated by the thought that if others knew how much he drank, his reputation would be damaged. At the same time he deceives himself into thinking that no one will ever notice or find out about his frequent secret drinking. Dependence on secret "shots" and self-deceiving pride over his ability "to hold his liquor" leads him on to greater

and greater indulgence. Especially the introspective, non-social type of person has to beware of this weakness.

No matter what your temperament, if you find yourself in the habit of "sneaking a drink" often each day, you cannot adopt a more necessary principle than this: "I shall never drink alone."

4.

You feel that when you are fatigued, or frustrated, or emotionally upset in any way, your only pick-up is a few drinks.

There is no easier path into alcoholism than acquiring the habit of using alcohol as a buffer for every minor (as well as major) crisis in your life. Every normal human life is filled with minor crises. There are the little spats between a husband and wife; the conflicts of personalities and methods in business; the misunderstandings among friends and relatives; the failure of deeply cherished plans.

If you have fallen into the habit of meeting every emotional set-back in your life with the words, "I need a drink," you are in great danger. Quantities of alcohol provide only a temporary relief for your ruffled sensibilities; they make your problems worse when you emerge from the fog, and they create terrible new ones.

5.

You find that you can get through the burdens of the day only by anticipating the drinking you will do at the end.

Every human being lives largely on anticipation and hope. The office-

worker finds his work easier when he can look forward to a game of golf at the end of the day or the end of the week. The housewife sings at her sometimes monotonous round of daily duties because she can look forward to a party she is giving for friends, or an outing with her husband and children, etc.

But once you have reached the stage in which your anticipations and hopes center around the imbibing of alcohol, you are in a bad way. Then alcohol has become the only compensation that makes your life worthwhile. How easy it will be to lessen the periods of anticipation and increase those of fulfillment, until you lose everything you ever cherished for the love of liquor.

6.

When you take one drink, you find inevitably that you go on to take two, then three, then perhaps five or six.

Here is a very clear sign that you are becoming more and more dependent on the reduction of consciousness that results from excessive drinking. Perhaps you have made a hundred resolutions that you will always stop at one drink or two. Yet you find that when you have taken the first, the resolutions vanish, and almost automatically you go right on up to the fifth or sixth. Perhaps you can still "hold it" fairly well, but the fact is that you have to "hold" more and more as time goes on.

This inability to stop at one or two drinks is a very bad sign. If you don't overcome it sharply and quickly, there is no way for you to go except downward into greater and

greater dependence on alcohol and ultimately real alcoholism. Perhaps you are already one of those whose only protection is not to take the first drink.

7.

You feel the need of a few drinks early in the morning.

In a physical sense, your faculties and powers should be at their best in the morning. Refreshed by a night's sleep, you should be ready to face the tasks and problems of the day without props or crutches of any kind. An old Chinese proverb says: "The morning hours have gold in their hands." The proverb applies to those who throw the full weight of their powers and energies into the work that needs to be done in the morning.

If you have come to the sorry pass that even in the morning you often feel the need of, and you take, a few drinks to bolster you up, your dependence on liquor has already advanced dangerously far. This sign is usually found in those who are also marked with that of drinking too much before retiring at night. Whether that is true of you or not, at least this rule you should put into practice at once and forever: "I shall never drink before noon," or better far, "I shall never drink before sundown."

8.

Your social life centers almost entirely around drinking.

Moderate drinking can play a part in normal social life, without harm to anybody (except the confirmed alcoholic.) Thus friends may meet after a long separation and celebrate by having a drink. Thus friends may

get together for a social evening of cards or conversation, and in the course of the evening have a round or two of beers or a couple of high-balls.

We by no means suggest that the drinking is necessary to a social gathering, or that they who never drink are not better off in the long run. We merely state that moderate drinking can be a part of social life without excess or harm to anyone.

But if for you there just isn't any social life without a great deal of drinking in which you take part, there is something wrong with you, and it will get worse instead of better unless you do something about it. If for you a party has to start with drinking and proceed with drinking and end with drinking, it is a sign that your whole outlook on social life is bound up with the idea of drinking. If every casual meeting with an acquaintance or friend leads to your taking several drinks, your social life is dependent on drinking. Wherever there is dependence on drinking there is danger, and you are in that danger.

9.

You have fallen into a regular routine of "meeting with the boys" (or "girls") at a certain tavern or bar, where you always drink more than is good for you.

It may be that as a workingman, you cannot get home on payday without stopping in a tavern for several drinks, which not only deplete your pay check, but make you a cross to your family when you finally arrive home. Or you insist on going out two or three nights a week to spend hours

drinking at a bar or in the backroom of a tavern with drinking cronies. Always on these occasions you drink more than you should, even if you don't become completely drunk. You have come to count on these regular tavern round-ups, and no consideration of family obligations or money seems to get through to make you realize you are in the way of becoming an alcoholic.

Dependence on regular sessions with the bottle is the ante-chamber to alcoholism. Don't deceive yourself by saying, "I have to get out once in a while," or "I go just for the companionship." If you have the habit of drinking too much at these regular tavern trysts, you are growing increasingly dependent on the liquor and the end will be tragedy. If you are a husband and father you have already done great harm to your family; your falling into alcoholism will be only the final blow.

10.

You are causing worry and sorrow and suffering to your family and friends by your drinking.

There is a point in the progress of every drinker toward alcoholism at which he recognizes the fact that he is causing anxiety and suffering to his family and friends, feels ashamed of himself after he emerges from the fumes of alcohol, and could, with an extra push of motivation and effort, break the bad habits that have begun to bind him. The great danger is that he will refuse to face the facts, as every alcoholic who has ever been cured eventually had to do, and instead proudly insist that he is in no

danger whatsoever. Are you among such as these?

When good-hearted friends warn you against your increasing drinking, do you say: "Don't worry about me. I can take it or leave it alone. I can quit whenever I want to"? When your wife pleads with you, and your children show fear of you, and your business associates avoid you, do you, instead of laying the blame where it belongs, on your drinking, accuse them of being against you, of making mountains out of mole-hills, of calumniating you?

Remember, if you are really not yet an alcoholic, you should be able to prove it by heeding the warnings of friends, and putting a stop to the suffering you have already caused your family by excessive drinking. If you merely get angry when you are warned, or blame your suffering family for driving you to drink, then you are too far gone to be helped by these words. In that case you are already in need of specialized treatment, because you are an alcoholic.

IT is not enough for a man or woman to know that they are slipping into alcoholism to bring about a cure. They also need powerful motivation to actualize their good intentions. That motivation can be provided by meditation on such thoughts as these:

1. Nothing more disastrous can happen to a man's character, his family, his home, his position in society, than his becoming an alcoholic. The habitual drunkard can destroy in a few months everything he spent years of his life to build up.

2. Excessive drinking is always a sign that a person is trying to escape from reality, that he is too childish and immature to face the disappointments, conflicts, difficulties that are a normal part of all human lives in this world. The drunkard is the world's worst victim of self-pity.

3. Drunkenness is an insult to God, because it disfigures and contorts the image and likeness of God in the soul of a human being. That is why the habit of excessive drinking often leads to loss of faith, blasphemies against religion, attacks on those who are trying to serve and love God. These are signs of abandonment by God, and signs that the drunkard has chosen the road to hell.

Motivated by thoughts like these, and by meditations on the passion of Jesus Christ, even a person who already shows all the signs listed above can change his course and return to habitual sobriety. Even some of the worst alcoholics have cured themselves, with the help of God and other people. If you who read these lines are not yet an alcoholic, but in the way of becoming one, take heart, take hope, take ACTION now.

All sickbeds in the world are either on the right side of the Cross or on the left; their position is determined by whether, like the thief on the left, they ask to be taken down, or like the thief on the right, they ask to be taken up.

Quote

THE LIGURIAN

Code of Catholic Conduct

How to Make A Genuflection

Ernest F. Miller, C.SS.R.

It is customary for Catholics, when they arrive at the pew in church that they intend to occupy, to make a genuflection.

There are two kinds of genuflections: the simple or *single* genuflection and the *double* genuflection.

The *single* genuflection is made correctly in this manner: hold the head and body erect, bend the right knee until it touches the floor; then rise at once. Do not turn sideways to make a single genuflection, but face directly ahead. Do not slide into the genuflection, but come to a full stop before making it. It is not necessary to bow the head. It is not necessary to make the sign of the cross when making a genuflection. When the right knee is bent, it should touch the floor on a line with the left heel and close to it.

Because of thoughtlessness there may be an inclination to hold the knee back from going all the way to the floor—in fact, to allow the knee to make only the slightest of bends in the direction of the floor.

Sometimes the pew is used as a prop or aid in making the genuflection. If the person genuflecting is old or ailing or bothered with stiff or creaking joints, it is sufficient for him to make a reasonable effort — to do what he can in making a genuflection, and he surely has a reason to use the end of the pew for support. If a person cannot do more than make an attempt at a genuflection, God will be satisfied with the effort and the good will. But if a young person, strong

and in good health, makes an imitation genuflection because of a lack of faith, because of indifference, hurry or thoughtlessness, or because it demands an effort to go all the way to the floor with the right knee, he obviously does not know what the purpose of a genuflection is.

When a Catholic genuflects on coming into church he is making an act of faith in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. He is making an act of adoration to God. The genuflection is the expression of adoration.

The simple or single genuflection is made not only when coming into church and when leaving, but also when going from one side of the church to the other and thus passing before the tabernacle.

The *double* genuflection (on both knees) is made instead of the single genuflection whenever the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the altar, during benediction services, during the hour of adoration, on Holy Thursday, etc.

To make a double genuflection, hold the head and body erect, bend the right knee first until it rests on the floor, then the left knee, so that a fully kneeling position is assumed. Bow the head moderately, raise the head again, then rise, unbending the left knee first and then the right. It is not necessary to make the sign of the cross.

If Catholics will remember that making a genuflection is an expression of adoration to God present on the altar they will find it not too difficult to make the genuflection correctly and with proper outward reverence.

Anecdotes and reflections about the graces of the sacrament of confirmation.

The Sacrament of Strength

John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R.

IF ANY of the sacraments today could fall under such a classification, the sacrament of confirmation would be classed as "the forgotten sacrament." For of all the sacraments, Catholics might be said to appreciate least its value and importance and beauty. And it is, indeed, regrettable, because there is such great need for it today — for its value, its importance, its beauty.

For the sacrament of confirmation is the sacrament of growing up. It is the difference between remaining a child, spiritually, and becoming an adult; between merely living in the state of grace, and appreciating the life of grace. Growing up means more than mere physical growth: it embraces everything included in such words as appreciation, values, responsibility, decisions and a thousand others.

And one does not merely grow up physically to the stature of a man; one also grows to that stature morally — but especially spiritually. It is this spiritual growth of grace which is fostered by the sacrament of confirmation. That you might realize a bit more vitally what the sacrament of confirmation does for your spiritual life, we invite you to read and meditate upon the following stories and incidents and examples. Perhaps they will reveal a bit more clearly what you are growing up to. Perhaps they will make growing up a bit easier.

•

While still a boy, President Garfield was asked what he was going to do when he grew up. His reply was one which every Catholic could apply to his own life: "First of all," he said, "I am going to be a man. For if I do not become that, I will never become anything."

•

Benedict Arnold was a traitor, a betrayer of his country. Though it

was too late—for it was on his deathbed—he realized that he had not grown up. He called those in attendance, begged piteously: "Give me back my faded coat of blue." They put it on him. And leaning down over him they could barely make out the last heartbroken words: "Would to God that I had never worn another."

In the sacrament of confirmation the bishop lays his hand upon each person's head, anoints the forehead with holy chrism in the form of a cross, and says: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Giving the person a slight blow on the cheek he reminds him that he must be ready to suffer everything for the sake of Christ. He is now an adult Christian.

In the days of the persecutions, a little girl was brought before Dionysius, the tyrant, and threatened with a horrible death. The tyrant was rather taken aback by her reply: "When I was a younger girl there was another wicked tyrant here, and we all wanted him to die. After his death, however, there came another still worse — so we all prayed that he, too, might be taken away. When he died, you came — worse than either of the other two. Now, fearing that another still worse may still succeed you, I pray rather for strength."

King Charles V of Spain wished to help his boy grow up, to appreciate

what he would one day be. He placed before him on one occasion a rather peculiar choice. On one table he placed a crown, on another a sword. Then he called the boy and put to him the question, which he would wish to choose. The prince had grown up. He smilingly stretched out his hand for the sword and said: "By this I will deserve the other."

Though we may not realize it we frequently draw upon the graces of the sacrament of confirmation to find our way around in a world of temptations and problems. — Tycho Brahe was a famous astronomer. His knowledge of the planets was fabulous. But he was a very absent-minded man. His coachman one day said to him: "Good master, you know your way about the heavens, but here on earth you are very stupid."

St. Peter of Verona, when a small boy, came home from school one day and was asked what he had learned that day. The boy proudly replied: "I have learned the Apostles' Creed. I have learned to say, 'I believe.'" The boy grew to manhood, and when he became a priest he once more, and more proudly, said: "Credo." Some years later, he suffered martyrdom for his faith, and even more proudly, Peter of Verona, when he had no more strength to speak, dipped his finger in his own blood and wrote upon the ground that one word: "Credo — I believe!"

All of this does the sacrament of confirmation do for us. Though we

can't see it or feel it or touch it, its strength and grace are always present to draw upon, when we have need: to appreciate what we are and what we have, to live up to the obligations we have assumed as Catholics, to face courageously the innumerable, embarrassing situations in which we

find ourselves, to overcome temptation, and all the rest.

This is what the sacrament of confirmation is, what it does for us. That you might appreciate it more, we invite you to reread the preceding stories, — read them slowly, reflect on them, meditate on them.

? ? Readers Ask... ? ?

Are Celibates Inconsistent?

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

OBJECTION: My understanding is that the Catholic Church forbids birth control because she wants all married people to have large families. If she is so concerned with that, why doesn't she allow her priests to get married and have families?

ANSWER: Our correspondent in this case is a little wide of the mark in the first part of his objection. The Catholic Church is not opposed to contraception *primarily* because she is in favor of large families. She is opposed to it because the methods used in contraception are a violation of God's law.

She does feel, of course, that married people should have families, and she encourages them to have large families. But if a limitation of the number of children seems indicated for a serious reason in a particular case, she recognizes and accepts the necessity. In such a case it is not the limitation of number she is opposed to, so long as this limitation is effected by continence, whether temporary or periodic.

But she can never give her consent to the practice of contraception, which is the abuse of a sacred faculty, and hence contrary to the natural and moral law itself.

As for the celibacy of her priests, the Church has always taught that, although marriage is a high and holy vocation, virginity is a higher and more perfect state of life. Christ Himself is the great model and inspiration in such a choice. St. Paul succinctly argues for the spiritual utility of virginity: "He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife." And earlier in the first letter to the Corinthians he refers to his own celibate state: "I would that you all were as I am myself; but each one has his own gift from God, one in this way, another in that."

EACH vocation in life has its own duties and each has its own privileges. There is nothing inconsistent in holding up both ways of life as pleasing to God. Nor is the Church inconsistent in reminding married people that, having freely entered into that vocation, it is their duty and responsibility to observe the law of God in regard to the use of their marriage privileges. Only by doing this can they merit God's continued blessing on their lives.

Pre-Marriage Clinic

Mixed Marriage or No Marriage?

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: As far back as I can remember, I have had two dreams that I always hoped and prayed would be fulfilled some day. The first was the dream of getting married; I have always thought that this was my vocation because I looked forward so much to one day being a wife and having a family. The second dream I have always cherished was that of marrying a man of my own religion—a Catholic. I have never doubted the wisdom of those who stressed the importance of unity in religion between husband and wife. Now I am in a dilemma. I am 32 years old. Marriage has been out of the question during my twenties because of the dependence of my parents on my job. But now I am more or less free, and I have been going out with a non-Catholic man who is a few years older than I am. He wants to marry me, and though he is willing to be married by a priest, and to go through the preparatory instructions, I do not think that he will seriously consider becoming a Catholic. The question that I keep constantly asking myself is this: Shall I sacrifice my second dream in order to fulfill my first?

SOLUTION: It would be foolish of me to try to answer your question in a categorical way, without much further information about yourself, your circumstances and the man who wants to marry you. This is a problem that you should personally lay before your confessor, or a wise priest who will consider all the angles before helping you to make up your mind.

Your age will be one important consideration, and the fact that you spent your younger years in supporting your parents. The Church more willingly

grants a dispensation for a mixed marriage to persons like yourself than to younger girls. Nevertheless she still insists on your safeguarding your happiness, your religion and the religion of any children you may have, as much as possible.

Therefore the strength of your own faith and the firmness of your Catholic convictions must be a factor. You indicate strong religious character in the very fact that you have always been convinced of the importance of unity of religion in marriage. This very strength may make the inevitable difficulties of a mixed marriage harder for you to bear in peace.

The character of the man who wants to marry you will have to be considered. If he is upright, honest, sincere, and of good background, it may be easier than you think to bring him to see the wondrous truth and spiritual rewards of your faith. You might even put off deciding whether to accept his engagement ring until he has made some investigation of your religion.

FINALLY, your circumstances should be considered by one who would advise you wisely; whether your way of life, or your work brings you into contact with men so that, if you gave this one up, there would surely be others wanting your friendship; whether your love for this man is so strong that, if you gave him up, it would be hard for you to think of marriage with somebody else.

It is because of all these angles to be considered that I advise you to consult with a confessor who knows you fairly well, or a kindly and experienced priest.

Mathias Huber, C.S.S.R.

Little Lessons in Catholic Living

'Tis Wisdom to Be Foolish!

The picture of Calvary on Good Friday tells the story of man's hate and malice. It tells us also of the victory of the King of kings, Christ the Son of God.

More than thirty years have slowly drifted by since He came as King to Bethlehem and held His court in a cave that was crowded with angels. Slowly since that time His perfect body has been moulded strong so that He might suffer the torments He longed for and freely willed.

Now the cross lifts the King and carries Him into battle — into the battle which He has come to fight— into the battle against sin and hell, the battle for God and for the redemption of our souls.

It was a battle fought not with pointed steel, but with dripping blood; a battle waged not by might and power, but with five wounds on hands and feet and side: a battle in which the armor was not protective mail

glistening in the sun, but torn flesh hanging like purple rags under a darkened sky; a battle whose cry was not, "Slay and kill!" but, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

When Christ spoke that first word upon the cross, He proclaimed the victory of divine folly over the wisdom of the world. He announced to all who heard and who would ever hear those words that the weakness of a God would crush the strength and power of the earth.

The men beneath the cross could not understand how Christ, who claimed to be God, could allow Himself to suffer. If He could not strike down these few men who had nailed Him to the tree then He was not God: and if He could strike them down and chose rather to suffer death, then He was a foolish God, and to a foolish God their hearts were closed. In the eyes of the world Christ was foolish: He was a failure. In the world's book it is written that He suffered defeat. On that first Good Friday the world looked up at the cross and made its choice; it pre-

ferred its own ways and turned its face away from Christ. For the world could not and cannot understand why Christ should make such foolish sacrifice.

If Christ could sustain the whole world in His hand, why did He fall beneath the weight of the cross? If the touch of His hands could restore sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, why did He permit hard nails to pierce them? If He could have proved His divinity by coming down from the cross, why did He not step down as a King from his throne?

"Foolishness!" the world shouted into the ears of Christ.

And Christ? What was His answer?

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He sees that for them and for many His sufferings will be useless. But still He is not angry with them. He is hurt by their mockery, but His pain becomes a prayer: "Father, forgive them!" He knows that by a blinding flash of power He can win the acclaim of the world, but He knows also that He is the God who was born to be crucified and to die.

And so to the world, the cross becomes a stumbling block, and Christ becomes a failure. But to those who understand, the cross becomes a steppingstone to heaven, and the crucified hand of Christ points to joy beyond the clouds.

Today the whole earth has become a Calvary; for wherever Christ with His Church has entered, the world still laughs its mocking laugh and

points with the finger of a wise superiority to the foolishness of those who have signed themselves as Christ's. It is hard for us, as it was hard for Christ. How easy, how pleasant, to come down from the cross and walk the broad and pleasant way! How hard, how bitter, to be crucified slowly on the cross we have chosen with Christ! How hard for us to hear it said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the humble — and blessed are they that mourn," when the world cries out, "Be rich, be mighty, be happy until your laughter sets the world on fire with a riot of joy."

The world cannot understand the wise foolishness of those who forsake all for Christ. The world calls him a fool who does not strike back when he is struck and mocked. The world laughs at him who hangs himself upon the cross of the Christian Catholic life, when he might come down from the cross so easily and be a prince among his fellows.

But the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. It is only from the world's point of view that we are fools as our Master was; but we are fools for the sake of Christ.

And when the world stands around us, wagging its head and mocking with its clucking tongue, it is our glory and our victory to pray the words that Christ prayed, the words which only they who have become fools for His sake can pray: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

FOR PARENTS OF RETARDED CHILDREN

GERARD BREITENBECK, C.S.S.R.

There is a prevailing lack of knowledge concerning the condition and needs of the retarded child.

This article does not attempt to supply that knowledge; but it offers some positive considerations to help parents of a retarded child look at the problem from the viewpoint of faith.

FORTY days after the miraculous birth of Christ, our Blessed Lady brought the Infant Jesus to the temple to present Him to God. Joseph, her husband, accompanied her. As they entered the house of God, joy and happiness filled their hearts. Before long, however, this delight and gladness was turned into the bitterness of sorrow.

At the entrance of the temple, a venerable old prophet, Simeon, met the holy family. Taking the young child into his arms he publicly blessed God that his eyes were privileged to look upon the face of this Infant, the long expected salvation of the world. How the face of the young mother brightened with radiant bliss! But this perfect joy was not to last. In the next breath there came a sword-thrust of sorrow that was to

affect her profoundly the rest of her life. Simeon prophesied: "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce." (Luke 2:34-35) Thus the terrible announcement of the future was uttered. For years upon years her grief and pain of soul would come from a threefold source: her people, her child and herself.

In the Blessed Virgin Mary the virtue of patriotism was developed to a high degree. In her heart there was all the love of a true Jewish maiden for her own nation, her people. But these same people would be a source of trial, for Simeon had said: "This child shall be for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel." From her beloved people would come untold agony. They would hurl insults at her and at her boy. They would clamor for His death.

ANGUISH and agony would also surround this beloved mother each time she would look at or think of this beautiful, extraordinary child of hers. The prophecy was absolute

and clear. The will of God demanded that her Son was to suffer, was to be ridiculed, laughed at and mocked. He was to be "a sign that would be contradicted." As her love grew stronger with each new day, so too would the pain of the realization of the prophecy become more intense. The more her love for Him deepened, the greater her sorrow would become.

People saw her going about as the most beautiful, the loveliest of God's creatures. She was gifted by God as no other human being had ever been gifted. Despite all this she was the mother of an extraordinary Child, the mother of a Child who would bring sorrow to her as He fulfilled God's plan. Never would individuals know as they passed her on the street that her heart was constantly bleeding. During every waking hour the sword would twist and turn to wound and pain.

In the lives of thousands of mothers and fathers of today these events are repeated. A sword of sorrow is thrust through their hearts, the hearts of mothers and fathers of retarded children. Let us review the scene.

During the months of pregnancy how these parents pray for a normal and healthy child! With what expectant joy and happiness they welcome the object of their love into this world! They become uneasy as they see that their beloved child develops so slowly. Secret doubts begin to plague them as the child fails to develop, fails to focus his eyes and to grab for his toys as other children of his age do. They try to console

themselves. They say there is no exact timetable for individual development. Yet the fear remains. Why is development so slow? What is wrong?

Finally they take the child into the immaculate halls of a specialist. Surely, with all the advantages of modern medicine, with all the knowledge of modern science, a remedy can be found. The doctor examines and probes. The parents anxiously wait. Then as did the prophecy of Simeon of old, the doctor's words pierce the soul of these good parents with a sword of sorrow as he predicts the future of the child. Refusing to believe, they begin a frantic search to find a doctor who will deny the first diagnosis; but each new specialist only confirms the verdict of the other doctors.

So the soul anguish and the sorrow of these modern parents go on. They come as the sorrows of the Blessed Mother came, from the people around them, from their precious child and from within themselves.

There is a prevailing lack of knowledge concerning the condition and needs of the retarded child. It is because of this ignorance that there is so much misunderstanding, so many fears and even superstitions. These give rise to many a cutting and cruel remark, to many an old wives' tale which may be hurled time after time at these afflicted parents. Their souls are pierced, their hearts are torn asunder as even their good friends and relatives fail to understand their problem. So sorrow comes to them, as it did to the Blessed Mother, from the people.

JUST as sorrow came to the Blessed Virgin each time she looked at her beloved Son, so these parents feel pangs of pain as they gaze on their little one. Great joys of achievement, of knowledge, of success can never be his. He is different. How he may be hurt by a thoughtless society! Because of his infirmity the love of the parents deepens and their pain becomes greater.

Then there comes a sorrow from within themselves. There is the gnawing fear and uncertainty of the future. The constant anxiety, the ever-protecting care that must go on and on. The enormity of the undertaking all but drains their courage. The world sees these parents as gifted, successful men and women. It sees them go about their work as though they had not a care in the world. Only a few intimate friends know anything of the sword of sorrow that pierces their hearts.

Now comes the question, "Why? What have we done? Is this a punishment for sin? Did we fail? Is God displeased with us? WHY? WHY?"

Long years ago the same question was put to our divine Saviour concerning an extraordinary child. A certain man was born blind. As our divine Saviour and the apostles were passing by, the disciples asked Him: "Rabbi, who sinned? This man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Our Lord answered that it was due to neither. His condition was permitted by God so that the power of God might be made manifest.

TO the parents of a retarded child let me say that God must have loved you very much to have confided to your care a child who needs so much attention and love. The angel said to the mother of God: "Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Of all the millions and millions of women that God did create or could have created He chose Mary to be His mother, the mother of an extraordinary Child, the mother of the suffering God-man. Thus the angel specifically designated her: "Blessed art thou amongst all women." So too God could have elected other parents for this retarded child. In His wise providence He chose you as His privileged ones. A modern angel could say of you and to you as Gabriel of old: "Blessed are you amongst parents." Why? Why? He wanted you to be the parents of a saint.

A few short years ago the world thrilled at the solemn canonization of St. Maria Goretti, the child-saint. Before the thousands gathered in Rome, the Holy Father solemnly proclaimed that this little girl had absolutely and positively fulfilled the purpose of life: she saved her soul. He declared that she was a saint in heaven. Present in that vast audience was a humble old lady, the mother of Maria Goretti. From the hearts of many another mother must have come the cry: "O what a happy mother is the mother of Maria!"

How often human mothers have had to weep over their wayward children! The hearts of loving parents

are broken as they must weep over children in invalid marriages, inmates of prisons, addicts of drink and dope, delinquents in conduct. Sufferings and heartaches may come, but the parents of a retarded child can thrill with exaltation and joy as they say: "This child is a saint."

ALTHOUGH this little one does not have the full use of reason, he does have the supernatural life of grace through baptism. The life of God flows through this child. He has it made. For all eternity this child will rejoice with God. He has fulfilled the purpose of life. Salvation has been accomplished. The parents of a retarded child need never worry about these things.

Strange to say, pain and suffering seem closely linked to the world itself, and yet through these woes there come at times great blessings. In the physical order, our planet had its ice age, with great bodies of frozen water crushing through hills and mountains, causing untold disruption. Our earth had and still has its tumultuous change of seasons. In the spiritual order there was the cataclysm of untold magnitude when the God-man suffered on the cross. Through His suffering, however, He brought salvation to mankind and the resurrection was the final manifestation that the love of God was stronger than the power of sin.

It must never be thought that because one suffers, therefore one is guilty or is being punished. The Christ who died on the cross did nothing wrong. Innocence itself endured pain, and innocent ones today

suffer as a means of reparation. The parents of a retarded child can offer up their heartaches and sorrows as a means of reparation for a sinful world. They can atone.

At times their lives may be an agony of crucifixion. At such times the cross of Christ and the beautiful doctrine of reparation give real meaning to their lives. Love cannot extinguish suffering, but it can diminish it. Just as love makes an all-night vigil by the bed of a sick child seem less hard, so too, love can work its wonders here.

YOU can find peace in resigning yourselves to the divine will and uniting your heartaches with the sufferings of Christ on the cross in atonement for the mistakes and sins of the modern world. Many people today think they can bring peace to the world by means of bullets, tanks, atomic bombs, aircraft carriers, supersonic planes, U. N. conferences, but all to no avail. Our Blessed Lady gave the formula to a modern world for true peace when she spoke from out of the skies at Fatima in 1917. Through the little children she said that reparation is needed to atone for sin. Prayer and spiritual amends through suffering will bring peace.

You, the parents of a retarded child, can be true peacemakers in this world of today. You can win salvation for mankind through your patient endurance of the cross, through your acceptance of God's holy will. Expiation through sorrow is drawing many a heart back to God today. Your suffering and heartaches now have a meaning of union with Christ

on the cross. You become other Christs in the world atoning for sin and winning salvation for human souls.

THUS, dear parents of a retarded child, you can make your difficulty become a great source of virtue and merit. No one can give you the full explanation as to the WHY. All human sorrows must await the day when we will be shown the complete and full reason for them in the vision of God. Until that time, however, we can present a few positive reasons to assist you in understanding how your life parallels that of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the foster father of Christ. In the temple they presented the Christ-child to God. Through this extraordinary gift of the greatest offering ever made to God there came suffering and there came blessings. The sword of suffering was thrust into the heart of Mary; but there also came great blessings. Mary and Joseph became great saints; the Blessed Virgin became the comforter of the afflicted, the helper of all in need; St. Joseph became the universal patron of humble families, the model of all fathers.

Great are the many patrons and saints in heaven today. None greater can we suggest to you, the parents of a retarded child, than the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. They know what it is and what it means to live and work with an extraordinary child, "a sign that will be contradicted." In your doubts and trials, in your heartaches and moments of spiritual agony they will comfort and encourage you.

NINE SPIRITUAL REMEDIES

1. A little more patience — to bear up with this person with whom I am compelled to live, and who is not at all congenial to me.
2. A little more firmness — to continue this work, which duty demands and which is so disagreeable to me.
3. A little more humility — to remain at the post to which God has led me and which does not correspond with my dreams and plans.
4. A little more common sense — to take people as they are and not as I should like them to be.
5. A little more prudence — to bother as little as possible about others and their affairs.
6. A little more strength — to endure an event which so suddenly and profoundly disturbs my peace of soul.
7. A little more cheerfulness — so as not to show I have been hurt.
8. A little more unselfishness — in trying to understand the thoughts and feelings of others.
9. Above all, a little more prayer — to draw God to my heart and take counsel with Him.

★

Being positive is often just being mistaken at the top of one's voice.

★

There is ultimately no substitute for the home. The future of this nation rests not so much on technique and science and the atom bomb as upon parents willing to pay the price of parenthood.

Jos. R. Sizoo

THE LIGUORIAN

For Wives and Husbands Only



Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.



Must the Marriage Act Be Limited to Possible Procreation?

PROBLEM: In the December *LIGUORIAN*, under the heading, "Purity in Marriage," you say that "the marriage act must always be apt or designed for procreation, even though by reason of age or sterility or some other circumstances it happens to be known in a particular case that conception will not result from it." This statement has me bewildered. If it is a known fact that procreation cannot ensue from the use of the marriage right, because of age or sterility, is this not a conspiracy against birth just as much as if mechanical or chemical contraceptives were used? Would it not therefore be a mortal sin because both persons take part in an act that is not apt for procreation?

SOLUTION: First let us quote the full statement of Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical on Christian Marriage, of which our statement quoted above was a synopsis. Pope Pius XI said: "They are not considered as acting against nature who in the married state use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial rights, there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence, which husband and wife are not forbidden to

consider so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved."

The reason behind this papal statement rests upon the very nature of the contract of marriage. Marriage is a contract, sacramentalized by Christ, in which a man and a woman freely grant to each other the permanent right to those actions which nature has set up as the necessary means to procreation. Of course they bind themselves to accept any children that will result from the proper use of the privilege they grant each other; but their contract directly and immediately concerns itself only with handing over the right to the actions that are, in the manner in which they are performed, apt for procreation. They contract to share in these actions whenever asked to, and to do so in the manner through which children are begotten, even though in particular cases the result will not follow.

If the lawfulness of marriage had been made dependent by God's law on pre-knowledge of the possibility of conception, then marriage would be very insecure, and the consciences of the married would be intolerably taxed, and the secondary purposes of the privileges of marriage would be almost completely annulled. If the lawfulness of the marriage act depended on known fertility and pos-

sibility of conception, then persons who married but later found themselves to be sterile could doubt or deny the validity of their marriage. And even for the fertile, there would be constant sources of doubt, and many very grave temptations.

THAT is why the natural law concerns itself primarily and essentially with the manner in which the marriage

act is performed, not with any known or suspected or doubtful consequences of the act. That is why the natural law decrees, as Pope Pius XI stated it, that "they are not considered as acting against nature who in the married state use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons of time or certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth."

Problems of Professional People

Put Your Best into Your Job

QUESTION: I am an electrician and I do my best in every job assigned to me. I also read technical books relating to my type of work, so that I can become more efficient. Some of my fellow workers laugh at me for my exact and painstaking methods, and tell me that as long as I do work that is accepted as satisfactory, I am doing all that I should do. Now, I know that much of the work that is accepted nowadays is far from perfect. I am wondering whether I should continue to seek perfection in my tasks or should follow the practice of my fellow workers and be satisfied to "get by" with my job.

ANSWER: It is to be regretted that there are not more persons nowadays like our questioner — persons who put their best efforts into their work and try to perform every task as perfectly as they can. Certainly, this is the Christian ideal, for it is an evident application of Our Lord's admonition to be perfect (*Matthew, 5:48*). And when a task involves some form of assistance to our fellow men, as in the case of the industries and professions, a person has the

opportunity to exercise the exalted virtue of Christian charity.

Hence, the tailor should put the best of his skill into every suit of clothes he makes. The plumber should try to install water pipes in such wise that they function efficiently for the longest possible period. The barber should endeavor to make every haircut as fine a piece of tonsorial art as he can produce. The lawyer should give every client the full advantage of his legal knowledge. In a similar way we could go through the various trades and professions, pointing out that every person who practices any of them should give the best of his talents toward the performance of the tasks expected of him.

It was this spirit that characterized the working men of the middle ages, who constructed the beautiful cathedrals of Europe, that are still recognized as masterpieces of architecture and beauty. The men who built these glorious edifices loved their work and strove to make a perfect job of even the smallest detail. Above all, they were animated with a

fervent love for God, in whose honor these majestic churches were being erected.

There are occasions when the obligation of putting one's best into a task is most serious, so that the failure to do so would be a grave sin. Such a case would occur when even slight negligence might endanger human lives, as in the construction of an automobile or an airplane. This is particularly true in the case of a physician or surgeon. It can happen — and perhaps sometimes does happen — that a sick person is made worse, or even dies, because the attending doctor did not give the best of his knowledge and skill to the case. For example, a surgeon who is going to perform a difficult and delicate operation that calls for several hours of concentrated study of medical books may decide instead to go to a party or play a game of golf, relying on his general knowledge to guide him aright in the operating room. If he makes a mistake

and the patient dies, who will know the real cause, except the surgeon himself?

IT SHOULD be noted that when a client or patient suffers some harm because of the culpable negligence or ignorance of a craftsman (for example, the automobile constructor) or a professional person (for example, the doctor), the latter is bound in conscience by the law of God to make reparation or restitution, as far as he can, if he foresaw that such harm might result. When someone's death is included in the harm thus done, the guilty party may be bound to compensate the deceased person's relatives, even though the civil law does not take up the case.

The highest form of perfection in the performance of one's tasks is to do them to the best of one's ability out of love for God.

Very Rev. Francis J. Connell,
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STRANGE NAMES

We have heard of a young fellow with the first name of Omaha. The name was inspired by his having been born in Omaha, Neb. This brings to mind the tale told of the great Chicago ballplayer, "Cap" Anson, whose full name was Adrian Constantine Anson. When six years old he asked his mother why he had such "funny" names as Adrian and Constantine while the other kids were named John, George, Charles and Robert? His mother told him that she had been born in Adrian, Michigan, and his father in Constantine, Michigan. So they named him Adrian Constantine. That night when little Adrian Constantine knelt in prayer, he thanked the Lord that his mother had not been born in Ypsilanti and his father in Kalamazoo.

Information

FAVORITE QUOTATION

G. K. Chesterton was one of ten well-known writers once asked to give their favorite quotation. He replied: "One of my favorite quotations is the remark of Mr. Josh Billings of the United States of America. 'It ain't so much people's ignorance that does the harm. It's their knowing so many things that ain't so.'"

TEEN-AGERS and RELIGION

RELIGION sometimes is quite a problem for boys and girls in their teens. It is not that teen-agers do not possess religion. They do. They were baptized in the faith as infants. They followed the faith as children. But as teen-agers they have a tendency somehow to lose their fervor for their faith and to act as though it were of little consequence in their daily life.

This is not an indictment of all teen-agers. But it covers a large enough number of them to make a discussion of the fact a necessity.

Why are so many young people indifferent to religion?

A few, of course, are too tough *in their own esteem* to be bothered about that which they associate with weakness and weaklings. (They would change their minds if they acquainted themselves with the lives and the sufferings of the martyrs and saints of religion.) They look upon themselves as hard as nails. For them to profess religion would be to confess softness, emotionalism, sentimentality. So they have as little to do with religion as possible.

Thank God, these cases are exceptions.

Ernest F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

Another reason for teen-agers' lack of interest in religion is the fact that young people are strong and healthy and filled with appetites for the joys and the pleasures of the world. Religion has to do with God and the soul and the life after death.

Teen-agers feel that they do not have to worry about the life after death just yet. Maybe later on when they are older and the exuberance of youth has disappeared; but not while they are still in their teens. There is no point, they feel, in acting old before one actually is old.

Besides there are so many temporal interests consuming the energy and commanding the attention of teen-agers that there is little time left over for anything else. There are parties and dates and school work and jobs after school and a hundred other occupations, recreations and commitments. If one pays diligent attention to all these necessities, one has hardly time to eat and to sleep, much less to spend precious moments in pursuing religion.

Perhaps the main excuse given by teen-agers for not worrying too much about religion is the rigor of religion in forbidding certain things and in prescribing other things that are difficult and that teen-agers want or do not want to do. Religion, they think, takes the joy out of life. It halts them in giving free play to their feelings and their desires. They don't like that.

Thus, religion teaches that it is mortally sinful to arouse passion in the body through an entirely unnecessary touching of the body for the sake of the pleasure and the passion that such immoral handling causes. A teen-ager with this habit may not have the backbone or the moral courage to give up the vicious practice. A teen-ager so afflicted may not *want* to give up the practice. What then? If it is either the bad habit or religion that must go, the choice is made in favor of the dismissal of religion. Self-abuse henceforth has a free ride. The force set up to stop it has been put aside.

RELIGION also teaches that it is seriously wrong for a boy and a girl to become too intimate through prolonged kissing and petting and necking when they are out on a date. But this boy and this girl want to kiss and to pet. Everybody else does it. Why should they be stopped? They want to park in the car in some dark corner and misuse each other's body. If religion tells them that they should not do this, it is too bad for religion. They cannot be bothered. The kissing and the petting and the

parking go on. The practices of religion taper off.

Religion is very firm in forbidding the looking at obscene books and pictures. But there are so many "interesting" pictures and books in drugstores (even Catholic drugstores) and on newsstands. And these books and pictures are so easily accessible. They fill one's whole vision the moment one steps inside the door of the corner drugstore or comes within ten feet of a newsstand. It's fun for a boy and a girl to page through this pornography. It tickles and delights the senses. Religion is asking a great deal when it demands that the eyes be averted from that which is sensual and seductive.

Religion even goes to the extent of telling teen-agers not to carry on steady courtships while they are still in their early teens, not to allow themselves to become too interested in sex and in the opposite sex, not to renege on their obligation of obedience, respect and love which they owe to their parents and all those who have authority over them, even though they have arrived at their late teens and feel as though they are quite grown up. Religion reminds them that as long as they are under the parental roof, they are subject to their parents in all things that touch the discipline and right order of the house and their own proper upbringing and training.

TO boys and girls who insist on going out steady with the same boy or girl even though they are hardly more than fifteen or sixteen

years old, who refuse to give allegiance to parents and teachers and the custodians of the law, who find it irksome to study and who do not give a care for the rights and the property of others, the prohibitions and restrictions of religion are most odious. There is only one thing that they can think of to do, and that one thing is to loosen the thongs that bind them to their faith and its commands, and to be as free (so they think) as the winds that roam through the skies.

They do not feel obligated to give up the practice of religion entirely. That is out of the question because of parental pressure if for no other reason. But they can have as little to do with religion as possible. They can work at it in such a way as to concern themselves with the minimum practices.

This is their minimum:

They allow themselves to inhabit only the shadows and the vestibules of churches when the divine services are in progress. They cling to the back walls. They have a penchant for doors that lead out — they must be near the doors at all times in order to make a quick escape from devotions that they are not interested in and have no desire to study in order to find out what they are all about. Their use of the sacraments of confession and Communion is rare, and even then in some doubt as to validity because of habits of serious sin for the destruction of which no really firm purpose of amendment is made. Seldom do they pray. Hardly ever do they think of God.

This is a sad, indeed a tragic picture.

INDIFFERENCE to religion bodes ill for the future of the teen-ager. It is like handwriting on the wall. A miracle might happen to prevent a spoiled adulthood. But miracles are not multiplied needlessly by God. Teen-agers who expect a miracle to give them the success and happiness in later years that they were not willing to prepare for in their early years through a tenacious clinging to the practices of religion are teen-agers who are reaching for the improbable if not the impossible. God helps those who help themselves with the props and the aids He gives them for the various stages of their life. Religion is an indispensable prop and aid for the years of the teens.

It is during the teens that passions begin to assert themselves, that the world shows itself as particularly attractive and that the devil does his best to establish evil habits of sin. Without God's special help a growing boy and girl simply cannot be victorious against all these powerful enemies. God's special help comes through the Mass, through the services and prayers of the Church, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, which intercession is obtained by means of the religious practices and devotions that cultivate the affection of the Blessed Virgin and the saints. But the help of God comes especially *through the reception of the sacraments of confession and Holy Communion.*

Confession and Holy Communion are necessary for the teen-agers who want to stay out of mortal sin, who want to retain an unwavering peace of mind and who are desirous of going to heaven when life on earth is over and of being happy with God forever. Our Lord says, "He who eats My Body and drinks My Blood will have life everlasting."

The statement can be safely made that it is almost impossible for a teenager to continue to live in the state of grace who goes to confession and Holy Communion infrequently, and then with a minimum of seriousness and devotion. The attraction and temptation of mortal sins against self, of sins with one another, of sins of dishonesty and destructiveness, of sins of dangerous day-dreaming and morbid investigating through talking about and reading and looking at things that are forbidden — the attraction and temptation is too strong in the teen-ager to be controlled and conquered except with the help of God. This help comes through taking God into one's body in Communion so that His divine blood can mingle with tainted human blood and so that His courage and strength can make the attacks of temptation against the weakness and inexperience of youth futile and without effect.

And so with confession. One cannot retain a bad habit very long if one constantly (EVERY WEEK — for many, EVERY DAY) expresses sorrow, makes firm resolutions, confesses and receives advice from the

priest in the sacrament of confession. Boys and girls who live habitually in mortal sin are boys and girls who go to confession only every few months or at best once a month; which latter infrequency in many cases is insufficient even though it be once a month. And only too often confession is submitted to hurriedly and without due emphasis on the act of contrition and the help that the confessor can give if that help is asked for.

The frequentation of the sacraments can be the salvation of the teen-ager of the present age. That statement can be made in regard to all teen-agers, no matter how strong their passions may be and no matter how many sins they may have committed in the past. God is the One who made the statement first. He said to the people of His day that the person who eats His body and drinks His blood will never taste death. And the Church teaches that the person who goes to confession regularly and well is morally certain of going to heaven. What greater success can there be than that?

It would seem, then, that religion is necessary for the teen-ager.

IT is so necessary that if I, the composer of these lines, were not a priest but rather a man in the world, and had my mind set on acquiring a wife, I would not even consider allowing my choice to fall upon a girl who felt that religion was not important, a girl who was careless and indifferent in the sacred duties that she owed to God. She might be the most popular girl in the city. She

might have charm and beauty and personality to an exceedingly high degree. Still, I would not think of asking her to be my wife. Nor would I be unwise in my decision.

This is a girl who sees no necessity in being true and faithful to God and to God's religion. Have I any argument that she would be faithful to me — me a billion times less important than God? Very probably once the freshness of the honeymoon wore off and the fragrance of our first love disappeared, she would be on her way like a kite in a high wind. She gave proof of her instability and infidelity in her teens when she could not spare a moment or two for God. She deserted God and turned traitor to her religion. I would be a fool to suppose that she would not treat me in the same way.

As it will be with marriage and the irreligious teen-ager, so also will it be with everything else.

BUT the practice of religion demands more of the teen-ager than the reception of the sacraments, attendance at Mass and the saying of prayers. These are the most essential things to be attended to. But they are not all the things. Teen-agers should participate in the social activities of religion on the parish level.

Sodalities, dramatic clubs and parish societies very often fail because of the lack of interest on the part of the young people who should make them up. These same boys and girls are intensely interested in high school activities, in projects of a purely private and personal nature, in neighborhood parties and organizations, in

civic beauty contests and local promotional schemes. But they have no time at all for parish activities.

Some boys and girls even go to the extent of becoming involved in high school fraternities and sororities. To them parish sodalities are dead and drab and too pious to be considered as a means of fun. Fraternities and sororities offer them everything they want.

Of course, teen-agers of strong character, of firm backbone and of a mind that belongs to themselves and not to somebody else, and especially not to a group of young people who labor under the delusion that to be a snob is to be big and important — these teen-agers are not meant. High school fraternities and sororities very often cater to snobs. They accept only those who are considered the right people. All other boys and girls are not good enough to belong. They are blackballed and kept out. And the standard used for choosing new members is most arbitrary and undemocratic.

It can happen that boys and girls who are not selected to become members of a fraternity or a sorority suffer deeply, thinking that they are inferior to their fellow students, and for that reason are unwanted. Thus, high school fraternities and sororities sponsor uncharitableness and cause hard feelings and antipathies that long years will not be sufficient to destroy. Catholic boys and girls, with the clear-cut mandate given to them by Christ, the founder of their religion, to love *all* their neighbors as

they love themselves, should have no part in an organization that cultivates snobbery, uncharitableness and the exclusiveness that can bring a hundred evils in its train. The fact is well-known that many fraternities and sororities are not averse to wild parties that have for their purpose drinking, carousing and experimenting in those things that are mortally sinful and explicitly condemned by Christ and by Christ's Church.

But even though there be no wild parties in a particular fraternity or sorority to which Catholic boys and girls belong, these boys and girls are much wiser if they interest themselves in the organizations that are connected with their parish. It may be that they are too accustomed to having their recreation made for them by somebody else — by the television, the movies, the radio. It is so much easier just to sit and to be entertained by others than to think up methods of entertainment oneself. The parish sodality can prove whether or not they have any talent for setting up their own entertainment.

Many teen-agers would like nothing better than to enter the world of the theatre after they leave school, or to become writers or prominent business men and women. How can they anticipate success in their aspirations if they are unwilling to try out and exercise their imagination and their potential talents and their inventive genius within the limited facilities and the restricted purposes of a parish society? They should consider a parish society a challenge to their ability to make a complete suc-

cess, socially and spiritually, of an organization that perhaps had never been a success before.

FINALLY, teen-agers should make a decided effort to know the priests of their parish in order to receive from them the help they need in moments of doubt and difficulty. The priests may not be geniuses or world-beaters in worldly affairs, or images of famous movie stars, or popular singers. But they have the grace of the sacrament of ordination upon them. They are priests, other Christs. Their advice carries the authority of Christ. Teen-agers should not only call their priests *father* but they should treat them as a father.

If there are tasks that can be done around the parish, the young people should be the first to volunteer their services. Often there is money to be counted, poor people to be helped, errands to be run, public school children to be instructed in Christian doctrine, altars to be decorated, Masses and devotions to be served at the altar and sung for in the choir. Who can take care of these necessities of religion better than teen-agers who are young and strong and healthy and in much better position to accomplish them than people who are older?

Catholic teen-agers will invariably live up to all the requirements of religion if they know what their religion is, if they make a real study of the teachings of the faith that was given by Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world. One cannot love what one does not know. One cannot give to

others what one does not possess oneself. The last word of all these many words to teen-agers in regard to religion is a suggestion — let them make their religion not a pious luxury, an unessential superfluity, but

rather a part of themselves, a way of living, a program of life. In so acting and so doing, they shall save themselves from natural and supernatural failure. They shall put themselves on the side of God.

Thoughts for the Shut-in

Meditation on Hope

Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.

EASTER is above all the feast of hope. A hopeful attitude is felt instinctively on contemplating the tremendous miracle by which Christ raised up His own dead body from the grave and thus at a stroke conquered darkness, death and despair.

Of all persons, the shut-in should try most to develop and increase the virtue of hope in his soul. Therein he will find his greatest source of consolation.

HOPE has three elements, each of which should become a point of meditation.

First, it means the expectation of the happiness of heaven when life is over. To strengthen this expectation, a person should train himself to think and even dream about what this happiness will mean. Often the words should be pondered: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what things God has prepared for them that love him." Most consoling also is that sentence of St. John: "In that day there will be neither mourning nor grieving, and death and parting will be no more."

The second element of hope is a firm reliance on the fidelity of God to fulfill the expectation of heaven. Every remembrance of the birth of Christ, every glance at the crucifix, every thought of

Christ's presence in the Blessed Sacrament should increase one's reliance on that fidelity of God. He was faithful to the point of concealing divinity and becoming a helpless child, faithful to the point of dying on a cross out of love for man, faithful to the point of performing a great miracle of His bodily presence in the Holy Eucharist. Therefore no heart can ever feel that He will be unfaithful to His promise that unfaithfulness will be given to all who love Him.

The third element in hope is willingness and even eagerness to pay the price that God has asked His creatures to pay for heaven. That price bears no comparison with the reward. In fact, there is nothing man can do or suffer that can deserve heaven. It is only because God has promised to accept the price He has assigned that it can be called a purchase price at all. In comparison with heaven, a long lifetime of unmitigated pain, with not a moment of compensation or joy, would still be small and inadequate. If the shut-in can convince himself of this, he will not be rebellious.

ALL these elements of hope find dramatic confirmation in the glorious figure of the risen Christ, standing triumphantly before the empty tomb on Easter.



POINTS of FRICTION

Nationality and Race

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

AN EVER present source of friction among human beings is the antipathy that easily arises between the various racial and national groups.

At the root of these antipathies undoubtedly are selfishness, vanity and pride, vices to which our fallen human nature is only too prone. The immediate cause, however, lies in some accidental disposition of circumstances. Thus, for example, the old settlers in a town may have been of German extraction. In the course of time immigrants from Ireland began to descend upon the locality. At once a fierce resentment sprang into being. Our nation's history is full of such instances. Time passes, and it may happen that eventually the Irish in turn find themselves being superseded by people of Polish extraction. Thereupon the Irish, forgetting how they themselves had been resented, now in their turn proceed to resent bitterly the advent of the Poles.

Or it may be the antipathy arises from the fact that a minority group in a particular city, the Italians, for example, is mostly composed of poor and struggling individuals. The foolish tendency of people in society is to look down upon them and regard the whole nationality as undesirable.

There is no need surely to dilate on how this perverted race pride sometimes expresses itself in regard to the Negroes. Evidence is ready at hand for any casual observer.

Unfortunately, when feelings are heated by friction of this kind, people are likely to give vent to their feelings in word and action. Thus there spring into being those generalizations about a particular nationality or race which calm judgment must dismiss as viciously untrue. From this same friction stem those uncomplimentary epithets which people carelessly throw around. To use the word "kike" or "wop" or "nigger" is to betray bias. Such designations are rightfully resented by the people concerned, because they convey a certain attitude of scorn and belittlement.

IT IS a sad commentary on the perversity of which our human nature is capable that natural antipathies should be so nourished and abetted.

At the same time the duty of the genuine Christian is clear. While acknowledging the fact that his emotions and feelings may incline him to dislike or resent a particular national or racial group, he will strive manfully to keep from being ruled by his emotions and feelings. He will try to avoid in his speech slighting and insulting references to people of other national origins, and in action he will try to exercise genuine charity to all.

Thus he will do much to eliminate friction in his own family and among his own friends. And what is more important, he will prove his right to the word Christian, since that means looking upon Christ as his brother and the brother of all human creatures, whatever be their race or nationality.

SIDEGLANCES

By the Bystander

Toward the Conversion of the World

THE Archdiocese of St. Louis is the birthplace of an organization that should have a powerful appeal to zealous Catholics wherever they may live. It is called "The Daily Worldmissionnaires." Much of the credit for its design and launching goes to Bishop Charles Helmsing, who at the time was auxiliary bishop of St. Louis and in charge of the Archdiocesan Propagation of the Faith Society, and who since has been made first bishop of the newly formed diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. The idea behind it was to make Catholics think daily about the needs of millions of un-Christianized souls in pagan lands and in abandoned sections of our own land, and then to inspire them to do something about it every day, both in a spiritual and a material way.

The most practical feature of the plan was the preparation of a long list of small possible sacrifices from which a member of the Worldmissionnaires could choose one each day.

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IT is a statement of simple fact that the conversion of the world to Christianity requires

three things: First, it needs the prayers of those already converted to Christ and living in the state of sanctifying grace; second, it needs sacrifice, not only on the part of the missionaries who go to preach the Gospel to the abandoned, but on the part of those who remain among the comforts and spiritual luxuries of home; third, it needs material means with which to support missionaries who go among strangers to make Christ known to them.

The second of these three things has a value entirely apart from any material product of one's sacrifices. Christ won redemption for the world primarily by sacrifice, and He asks that the sacrifices of those who have already become members of His mystical body be united to His own, that the grace of His redemption may reach more and more souls. Thus St. Paul could speak of his sufferings as "filling up those things that are wanting in the sufferings of Christ."

It is not that Christ's passion and death were not infinite in merit, and more than ample for all the human beings who would

ever live; but He willed that the cooperation of His followers would be needed to bring His redemption to others. The first element in that cooperation is sharing the cross, in the form of any sacrifice or mortification, offered up for abandoned souls.

THE Daily Worldmissionnaires bring together the three requirements for the spread of the Gospel of Christ on a *daily* basis. First of all, they recite, three times a day, an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and the ejaculations, "St. Francis Xavier, pray for us," and, "St. Therese of the Child Jesus, pray for us." Secondly, they sacrifice each day some luxury or convenience, offering the merit of the sacrifice for abandoned souls, and placing in an envelope the monetary value of the sacrifice. It is stressed that the act of putting aside the money be done each day, not at the end of a week or of a month, in order that the intention of the sacrifice may be consciously repeated each day. The Group Leader provides envelopes for this purpose, bearing the date of each day.

At the beginning of each month the Group Leader collects the envelopes from the month previous, and hands out new ones for the month beginning. When possible, talks are given to the various groups by foreign missionaries and others who can keep alive the members' realization of the importance of what they are

doing spiritually and materially for the missions.

The question that arises in many minds is this: How can I think of a daily sacrifice to make for the missions? The founders of the organization realized that this would be one question that they would have to answer most often, and so they prepared a long list of possibilities, one for men and one for women, many of which the average person might not think about unless he saw them on paper. Note well that it is asked that only one sacrifice be made each day, and it does not matter how small a material saving that sacrifice may represent. To give some idea of the wealth of the suggestions, we here present a partial list of those presented to all Daily Worldmissionnaires:

1. *Clothing:*

Postpone buying something new; make the old last longer.

Postpone having clothes cleaned or pressed for a week or two. (Do it yourself.)

Buy less expensive items than you might prefer.

Buy fewer new clothes.

Buy less jewelry and accessories to dress.

2. *Food:*

Choose less expensive items when eating out.

Omit dessert or choose less expensive one.

Use cafeteria instead of table service when eating out.

Omit cream and sugar in coffee.

Use milk instead of cream.

Skip coffee or coke break.

Take only one cup of coffee.

Omit snacks between meals.

Deny yourself a second portion at meals.

When shopping, select less expensive cuts of meat or other foods.

Use oleo instead of butter.

Take one less cocktail, or none at all on occasion.

If you usually have bacon and eggs for breakfast, skip the bacon or the eggs on occasion.

3. *Personal things:*

Cut down on unnecessary cosmetics.

Eliminate an unnecessary long-distance phone call.

Skip buying a magazine or newspaper on occasion.

4. *Automobile:*

Park in free place instead of parking lot.

Wash your own car or skip having it washed once in a while.

Use regular gas instead of ethyl.

Use street-car or bus instead of taxi.

Walk instead of riding to church or store.

Buy less expensive make of car.

Put off buying a new car for some time.

5. *Recreation:*

Buy cheaper seats at the theatre, sports events, etc.

Give up a movie you'd like to see.

Cut down on expenses of your hobby. (For example, no caddy for golf, put off buying new golf balls, clubs, etc.)

Spend less on travel. (Ride coach instead of Pullman, or tourist planes instead of first class.)

Eliminate some unnecessary expense on vacation.

THESE are only some of the suggestions that are offered to the Daily Worldmissionnaires. There are others concerning the care of one's home, smoking, hobbies, etc. Almost everybody, in any walk of life can make one little sacrifice each day, and put the nickel or dime or quarter saved into a place reserved for it. As this is done, the prayer for the missions can be said, the intention of offering up the sacrifice for abandoned souls can be made, and something very tangible can be done for the conversion of the world. Many can follow the program who have no contact with the Daily Worldmissionnaires at all.

There is no better test of a man's ultimate integrity and chivalry than how he behaves when he is wrong.

Chesterton

Meditation for Lent

What you should think of, during Lent or at any other time, when reciting the rosary with the five sorrowful mysteries as your meditations.

Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.

ed not only to atone for sin, but to manifest to all the world what a human being is willing to do to the Son of God by committing a sin.

THE central feature of Lent, as indeed it is the central feature of the whole Christian religion, is the remembrance of the passion and death of Jesus Christ. Through the death of Christ redemption was made possible for us all; through the sufferings of Christ in connexion with His death we are all reminded of the horror of sin, which was permitted to manifest its true meaning in torturing and crucifying the Son of God.

Thus it has always been accepted that the variety of the sufferings which Christ endured provides fruitful meditation on the variety of the sins whereby people offend Him, and appropriate thoughts of sorrow and amendment for each of the kinds.

Thus the true Christian is one who gratefully accepts the redeeming death of Christ, without which he could never have been saved. At the same time he often recalls the details of the suffering that preceded and accompanied Christ's death, because those details were meant to impress upon his mind, his imagination and even His feelings, the terrible nature of a serious and deliberate offense against the law of God. Christ suffer-

In the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary, five special torments of the Saviour are made the subjects of meditation. Each one can be related to special sins committed by those who caused His passion and put Him to death. Therefore, while meditating on these five harrowing events in the passion of the Saviour, the Christian should train himself to think of the specific sins by which he may have contributed to his Redeemer's suffering, or to which he might be tempted in the future. Such meditations may run through his mind, against the background of his Our Fathers and Hail Marys, in some such form as the following.

I. The Agony in Gethsemani

I am reminded, O Jesus, by Your bitter anguish in the Garden of Olives, of the many times You have asked me to bear trouble of mind and spirit, resentment against my crosses and afflictions, and of how poorly I learned from Your example to make them fruitful for my soul.

You bore the terrible anticipation of all the tortures of Your forthcoming passion; the black realization of how many would be ungrateful for Your sacrifice in their behalf, and even violent in their enmity against You; the degrading sense of being in some way identified with the awful sins for which You were about to atone. Though You lay writhing in agony on the ground, though Your sweat was mingled with blood forced from Your veins, though You felt a deeper horror than any human being would ever be asked to experience, still You prayed: "Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from me. Yet not my will, but thine be done."

And I — how often I have not prayed to be released from my troubles, but proudly demanded that God release me! How often I have sinned to escape burdens meant for me by God! How often I have threatened God with unbelief and rebellion if He did not release me from pain. Before You in the garden once more, I express my sorrow for my resistance to God's will, and promise for the future to meet every cross with Your words: "Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from me. Yet not my will, but thine be done."

II. The Scourging at the Pillar

SURELY You wanted to remind me, O my Jesus, of God's terrible displeasure over deliberate sins of the flesh, by the scourging You underwent during Your passion. Every pampering, petting, indulging of a human body, contrary to God's laws, had to be paid for by Your sinless body, and through physical torments that we are scarcely capable of contemplating in all their grim reality.

First they strip You and mock You in the shame of Your nakedness. Then they fasten Your hands together, and bind them tightly to a ring in the floor or wall of the dungeon. Then the blows come, the blows of leather thongs, tipped with bone or steel. The blows are not counted, as with ordinary prisoners, but continue on and on, till the scourgers are weary, and Your flesh is torn into ten thousand wounds, and Your body cloaked with a raiment of streaming blood.

And You who bear this unspeakable torment are the living God made man: the God Who created the human body, its powers of sex, its senses and imagination and memory and faculty of speech, all of which can be used deliberately to foster desires for unlawful pleasures in the body. You suffer to atone for such sins and to prevent such sins: may my memory of your scourging inspire undying sorrow for past sins and inspire me to resist every temptation and to avoid every occasion that might lead to such sins in the future.

III. The Crowning with Thorns

YOU are, O Jesus, the King of the universe, the rightful Ruler of all mankind, yet You accepted as part of Your suffering for sin a mock crown of thorns and a filthy royal robe as Your enemies' jesting and blaspheming rejection of Your kingship.

The thorns were many and sharp that they wove into Your crown. They did not lay it gently upon Your head, but made sure the thorns would be driven in by striking it over and over again with a rod. Then they made mock genuflections before You, and spat in Your face, while hurling their obscene insults against you.

Thus did You show me what I have done to You by my sins of pride. Like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, I have so often wanted "to be like God," or to reject God's authority so that I might do my own sweet will. And each time I disobeyed one of God's commandments, or refused to submit to Your will, or rebelled against the authority of Your Church, I struck Your crown of thorns with the rod of my pride, and drove the thorns deeper into Your head. I am truly sorry; I accept You as my only King; I will never rebel against Your authority again.

IV. The Carrying of the Cross

IT was Your primary purpose in coming into the world, O Jesus, to die on a cross for me. But first You had to accept the cross, and carry it beneath the hot sun over the rough stones of the streets of Jeru-

salem, and fall beneath it often, to make amends for all my failures to live up to the vocation to which God has called me.

Your vocation was the cross. How meekly You accepted it, after Pilate had five times declared You innocent of any crime. How You staggered beneath its weight, Your body already weakened to exhaustion by a sleepless night of torture, by the scourging and crowning with thorns, by lack of food and drink for many hours. How You longed for the shelter of Your mother's arms, when You saw her in the midst of Your cruel journey. Yet God had sent You to bear the cross, and You had chosen to bear it, and with the last bit of human energy You possessed, You carried that cross through the streets and up the hill to the spot where at last You could lay it down, only to be nailed to it by my sins.

I, too, O Jesus, have been given a vocation by God, a call to a special state of life in which I am to save my soul and to help in saving the souls of others. How easy my vocation is in comparison with Yours. How many rewarding and innocent compensations are mine, that were never granted to You. Yet how often I have failed to fulfill the duties of my state, how often I have sinned to escape responsibilities that God's will had clearly imposed upon me. You fulfilled Your task of carrying the cross to Calvary without a complaint, without relief, without consolation, to atone for my sloth, my failures, my seeking escape from

duty. Never again will I fail You, though fidelity cost me my life.

V. The Crucifixion

YOUR death, O Jesus, was offered up to Your Father in heaven for one great purpose, to win life for me, a new life, a divine life, a life that would entitle me to a share in Your Father's home forever.

How great was the price You paid to win this life for me. You had to be stripped again as at the scourging; nails had to be pounded through Your hands and feet to fasten them to the wood; the cross had to be raised and dropped as the whole weight of Your body fell with a jerk on the nail-holes in Your hands and feet; for three hours You had to hang, in thirst, in fever, in fatigue, in pain, before You could bow Your head and die.

And all the while You had in mind the Mass and the sacraments through which the merits of Your death would be made available to me. Every Mass is a re-enactment of Your sacrifice; every sacrament received is an application of the infinite merit of Your death to my soul. Yet how often I have neglected and perhaps even scorned the Mass. How

long have been the periods in my life when I have been content to seek no sacramental grace for my soul. O Jesus, dying on the cross for me, teach me to cherish the divine life of grace You won for me by Your death; inspire me to use the means — frequent attendance at Mass, frequent reception of the sacraments — to nourish and strengthen it in my soul; let me love You, and be united to You, and be happy with You forever.

WE WALK IN THE DARK

Without some form of mental prayer, the soul will find it almost impossible to remain for a long time in the grace of God. The Holy Spirit says: "In all thy works remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin."

He who often meditates on the four last things, namely, death, judgment and the eternity of hell and heaven, will not fall into sin. These truths cannot be seen with the bodily eyes, but only with the eyes of the mind; if they are not meditated upon, they vanish from the mind, and then the pleasures of the senses present themselves and easily seduce the heart; which is the reason why so many fall into habits of sin and are lost.

All Christians know and believe that they must die and be judged; but because they do not think about this, many of them live separated from God. Without mental prayer there is no light; we walk in the dark, and, walking in the dark, we do not see the danger we are in nor make use of the means we ought to escape damnation.

St. Alphonsus

GET THE FACTS!

A man is suing the owners of a cafe in Maryland for \$50,000 damages because he broke a finger while trying to pull his wife out from under one of the tables, where she had fallen when an angry waiter had kicked the leg off the chair on which she was sitting after she had protested that the alphabet soup was missing several letters.



readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Marriage Case

"This situation concerns a couple, unbaptized, who married and after a number of years, were divorced and then remarried each other again. Then the husband died and the wife married an unbaptized man who had never been married before. The woman, after her second marriage, became a Catholic and was baptized. After a year, her husband became a Catholic and was baptized. Now, are these two persons validly married? Are they truly valid Catholics?

N. N.

N. N."

• *This letter bore no name or return address, but we answer it since the case is not complicated. If the woman in the present marriage was not married to anyone except the husband mentioned as being deceased, then she was free to enter her present marriage. Her present husband, not having been married before, was free to marry. Therefore their present marriage, on these presumptions, is a valid marriage, and its validity is not affected by the fact that both of them were later baptized as Catholics. Their baptism, as Catholics, also is valid. Another reason for publishing this letter is that it gives us the occasion to call attention to the fact that letters like this one should be signed, with return address given, so that we can answer by personal letter. If any readers, in the past, have sent us unsigned letters*

with questions about marriage cases or with other questions and have not seen them published in this department they will know from this statement that we do not ordinarily publish or answer such letters in the magazine. Generally, the letter itself and the answer would require too much space or the question is of such a complicated or personal nature that it can properly be answered only by a personal letter.

The editors

Fourth Try

"This is my fourth try at writing this letter. I keep getting carried away with my thoughts. I'll try to be brief. I'm sorry if the letter I wrote last month seemed to be directed at you. My ire was directed at the writer of the letter in the *SIDE-GLANCES* and, believe me, I still feel the same way. It isn't your articles that are so maddening; it is the letters written by many of your readers (probably much like the one I wrote last month). Your articles are packed with information, and if they hit tender spots in our hearts, so much the better. I look forward to your magazine each month and don't seem to get much done until it is read cover to cover. Your article on chastity in the January issue was truly inspiring. I'm sure if the ardent young man who wrote the letter referred to in the *SIDEGLANCES*

in the same issue reads this article thoroughly, he will gain a new insight into what it takes to make a real man or woman.

N. N.

Mrs. R. D."

• *We received a great number of letters about the SIDEGLANCES in the January issue on mutual agreement in the practice of rhythm. For some of these letters and our answer please continue to read.*

The editors

Abuse of Rhythm

"In regard to the man whose letter was quoted in the SIDEGLANCES of your January issue, I respectfully suggest that his lack of self-control may be a case for medical science as well as for a priest. Sex is a wonderful God-given function, but where is the balance in this man's understanding of the many functions of marriage? One of the purposes of marriage is that husband and wife are to help each other get to heaven; apparently this husband believes he can escape hell only by having his own way regardless of his wife and children. Let him make a closed retreat and embark on a course of spiritual reading and he will acquire a new perspective.

New York

Mrs. N. N."

"In your January issue you quote the letter of a man who finds it hard to practice rhythm. His wife has had three children in four years and wants to practice rhythm for two years. I agree with your answer to this matter: rhythm should not be used if it causes either partner to fall into sin. However, this man's love for his wife cannot be very deep or strong. What would the poor man do when circumstances might make it necessary for him to give up his rights for a period of time? Michigan

Mrs. N. N."

"Surely you will get some mail about the letter in your SIDEGLANCES of the

January issue, and I hope you will print at least one favorable one. Although I am a wife and mother, I am definitely on the side of the husband. I believe rhythm is abused both purposely and also by many who have adopted the easy (but wrong) doctrine that, because it is not contraception, it is always right. That letter and your answers certainly deserve to be referred to often, and to be looked up by those who failed to read it. . . . Father Sattler's article on chastity was very good. Can we have more?

Ohio

Mrs. N. N."

"Your SIDEGLANCES in the January issue covered a subject that a group of us Catholic men have often discussed. You hit off some points on which we had agreed among ourselves, though we were afraid that nobody else would agree with us. Please send me 30 copies of the article for some of my friends who did not see it.

New York

Mr. N. N."

"I have just read the January SIDEGLANCES and am certainly on the wife's side in the discussion. If a man can't abstain according to rhythm, how will he ever be pure when circumstances over which he has no control (such as child-bearing, sickness, etc.) demand it? As for the wife's listening to propaganda from relatives against having a large family, how much time does the husband think she would have for him after caring for five, six or seven children all day? He should be grateful that there is such a thing as rhythm.

Chicago

Mrs. N. N."

"Regarding the letter in your January SIDEGLANCES criticizing rhythm, I feel that the writer's opinions are not representative of most Catholic young married men. I think that most conscientious couples struggling along with three or

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more children are grateful to have the rhythm chart to count on, harried as they are by the high cost of necessities. I do not think the 'dynamite' in Catholic marriage today is rhythm, because most of my Catholic, church-going neighbors and friends do not use it at all. They use contraception. The general feeling seems to be that anyone who uses rhythm is very religious, and often they do not believe that couples who say they use rhythm are telling the truth. Reading through the Bystander article, I couldn't help wondering how much the average Catholic mother of three or more children gets, or expects to get, of the luxuries so widely advertised. I have four small children, few of the modern conveniences, and we have mortgaged ourselves for the next fifteen years to make our house large enough for our family. However, I do know that my husband has more understanding and sympathy for me than N. N. has for his wife. My husband doesn't whine about the restrictions of rhythm, nor does he complain about constant temptations.

New Jersey

Mrs. N. N."

• *The above letters are merely samples of the many that came to us regarding the same article. Some of the letters assailed the husband, whose opinions were quoted in the January SIDEGLANCES, far more furiously than the ones printed above. Not too many faced the important truth that every human being in the world has his own problems, his own temperament, his own trials and temptations, through which he must work out his salvation within the framework of God's laws. Thus slipshod and harsh judgments of a man who admits to finding rhythm hard to follow are neither just nor helpful.*

The editors

The Catholic Press

"I was especially interested in the pointed paragraph in the February issue which presented a suggestion for Catho-

April, 1957

lic Press Month. The general reading public reads because it likes to; and this same reading public is not deliberately looking for reading matter which it knows is harmful, but it does want material which is interesting because it sets forth ideas in a manner which is meaningful to the reader, and adult in the sense that the writer takes it for granted that his readers are intelligent and mature enough to know what he is driving at. My own complaint is that, generally speaking, Catholic literature does not fulfill that requirement. The Catholic writer has an unlimited choice of subject matter: not only the material world around him but the religious and spiritual world which he knows through the teachings of his Church. Therefore his depth of perception should be so much keener, giving him a more mature vantage point, and this maturity should be reflected in his writing and conveyed to his readers. It would seem that the Catholic writer does not have the confidence of his non-Catholic fellow writer. Thus it would appear that the less-informed writer is correct merely because he has more confidence in his convictions as expressed in his writings. Catholic literature will attract the readers it wants and needs if it is presented with conviction and good style and thus will fulfill its purpose. It is not writing 'over one's head' which drives readers away; it is insulting one's intelligence by presenting material in a condescending or too childish a manner which does. THE LIGUORIAN is the best by far in fulfilling what I have outlined above. It is for this reason I write, in the hope that through its continued efforts an example may be set for others to follow.

Ann Arbor, Mich.

S. C."

"I think of the Catholic press as having a truly important mission, for it must inform and support Catholic readers in their faith as well as introduce non-Cath-

olics to the teachings of the Church. I was happy to see that your February cover commemorated Catholic Press Month. I believe Catholic editors must be extremely careful in selecting articles for their magazines and newspapers. It will not do to represent Catholicism as a narrow-minded, intolerant religion. That would be an untruth, as well as terribly unappealing to non-Catholics. If Catholic publications are to influence those outside the faith they must show charity to atheist, Protestant and Jew alike; for the moment they begin to ridicule and belittle, it causes the non-Catholic to become proud and resentful. Therefore I'd like to compliment THE LIGUORIAN for the article *Israel and Israeli* which showed love and understanding of the Jews.

Havre de Grace, Md.

D. B."

Social Gatherings for Catholics

"The Catholic Church seems to be constantly warning its members to stay away from toying with the idea of dating or marrying those not of their faith. But the Catholic Church shows much indolence, indifference and ignorance in that it makes no effort to help Catholics of all ages to meet Catholic friends. I am a middle-aged woman, not desperately looking for marriage perhaps, but certainly craving companionship. Since my parents died I have felt the pangs of loneliness. Recently, I attended a Methodist social gathering with a Methodist friend. She gave me a pamphlet which described the social activities in her church. Besides other activities they have a Youth Group (teen-agers), the Thirty-Niners (middle-aged group), the Golden Club (retired folks). How beautifully, thought I, has the Methodist church solved this problem. Has it ever occurred to you that the unmarried middle-aged woman is out of place in a Catholic Youth Club (her age), the Holy Name Society (her sex),

and in the Altar and Rosary Society (her unmarried state)? Nor does she belong to the club that is for the unmarried over 17 or 25. Women of her age are just not there. This is why I say that the Catholic Church is neglectful in helping those who need help to meet Catholic friends. I honestly think that it should take this responsibility.

N. N.

N. N."

• *We believe that it is too sweeping a statement to say that the Catholic Church is doing nothing to meet the situation pointed to in the above letter. We know that some parishes have solved the problem. But we should like to have practical examples of how this problem has been solved in various parishes and to have the facts come from members of these parishes. What has been done in your parish to help single, middle-aged persons make friends?*

The editors

Twice in the Same Place

"Well, I read *Face Downward* in the February LIGUORIAN. This is twice that I have had the living hell scared right out of me by a Redemptorist. First time was at a sermon on death during a mission. I'm bound to reach eternal bliss. I read every page of your magazine, even the boring articles. Your February cover was a sharp idea. Thanks to God for the C.S.S.R.

Cincinnati, Ohio

B. T."

• *We couldn't do a better job of pointing out that all of us must think seriously about hell in order to stay on the road to heaven. God did not create hell just to scare us. Nor do we preach or write about hell and the eternal truths just to scare people. Any scare can wear off after a while. But if hell and the thought of it can lead us to "eternal bliss" as the writer implies, and as God intended it should, then hell is worth a lifetime of thought.*

The editors

THE LIGUORIAN

The Challenge of Chastity

"What really pushed me into writing this letter was first the grace of God and then the article by Father Sattler, **THE CHALLENGE OF CHASTITY**, in the January issue. In that article is food for the soul, rich, satisfying, digestible and so necessary for everyone in this confused, unhappy age. I wish every priest in the country would read it, then preach it from the pulpit in every church. If this were done simultaneously, what a topic for conversation at every Sunday dinner table!

Freeport, N. Y.

Mrs. F. S."

Suggestion about Old Copies

"Perhaps some of your readers like to leave **THE LIGUORIAN** in places where others can pick it up and read it but only after removing their name and address. I have found that by pressing a strip of scotch tape over the name and address quite firmly and then lifting the tape carefully from the paper, the glossy coating on the cover of the magazine will come away with the tape, thus removing the name and address. This will leave the back cover intact, without cutting off the address.

West Allis, Wis.

D. J. K."

• *A very good suggestion! We tried it. It works!*

The editors

Christian Burial

"Yesterday I saw your article, *What The Catholic Church Does For You At Death*, and I must say it was very good reading. I am a Catholic in the funeral business. In saying that a mortician tries to hide the reality of death, you made me feel like a hypocrite. I have always taken great pride in my work, hoping that it would make the burden of sorrow a little easier for the bereaved. Have you ever seen a corpse

after a few days without proper attention? The funeral business, like every other business, is competitive, and the firm that does the best work is the firm that people will call on in time of need.

Ontario, Canada

F.M."

• *In complaining about the tactics of some morticians, we certainly did not wish to imply that dead bodies should not be decently and properly taken care of. "To bury the dead" is indeed one of the corporal works of mercy, recognized as such from ancient times, and this includes the decent preparation of the body for burial as well. Thus the mortician's profession can be a very honorable one. We reiterate our conviction, however, that in the modern world there is a tendency among morticians to over-emphasize the arts of the beautician in their work, and to abet and encourage a lavishness in caring for a dead person which far exceeds the bounds of decent Christian simplicity. Catholic undertakers who try to preserve these bounds may suffer from the "competition," but they will have God's blessing on their work.*

The editors

Kind Words

"I want to tell you how much I gain from reading your articles for teen-agers. It is refreshing to read a magazine that does not run teen-agers into the ground. I hope your articles have helped others besides myself as much as they have helped me.

Salem, Ore.

M. R."

"We would sacrifice anything just to make certain that we always have **THE LIGUORIAN** in our home. We have begun passing it along to our friends and now it makes the rounds to at least twelve people.

Williston Park, N. Y.

Mrs. J. W."

This article is being published after having been reviewed by several representatives of the group for whose special consideration it was written.

Points for Catholic Colored ... and Others

I am limiting this discussion to a few points, which can be applied to all Catholics; but I am offering them for special consideration to Catholic members of the colored population.

We Catholics certainly should be able to get together in a way of happy community living founded on the undying and vivifying love of Christ inspired in us by our participation in His divine life, whereby He lives in us and we in Him, by union with Him through the holy sacraments which we receive. Still, Catholics are human and there are those who will react at the sight of faults in Catholic colored people as any unregenerated segregationist might.

To make it easier to bring about a happy community life, Catholic colored people can easily take to heart these few points, which are actually little points, seemingly trivial in the

REINHARD STUMP, C.S.S.R.

minds of highly developed characters of all races; but little points go a long way toward bringing about happier living.

THE writer is presenting these points after some years of priestly work in a city parish where segregation and integration were vital issues, and where a kind of integration finally resulted, long before the decision of the Supreme Court and the concerted mass movement today.

1. *Receive the sacraments of Holy Communion and confession frequently.* By frequently is meant at least once a month. Oftener would be better. There is nothing new in this recommendation. It has been repeated day in and day out from the pulpit, for all Catholics. Many Catholic col-

ored persons are most faithful in the reception of the sacraments and may have as good a record as any other Catholic individuals. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement. Let Catholic men ask themselves how frequently they receive Holy Communion. In parishes frequented primarily by Catholic colored people it is most heartening to the priest laboring there to see large numbers at the holy table; in parishes where they are a minority in relation to Catholics of other extractions it is in truth most edifying to observe them often at Holy Communion.

I am by no means recommending that furthering the interests of the race and promoting integration be the motive why the Catholic colored people should approach the sacraments of confession and Holy Communion, because the motive must be simply a deepening of their Catholic faith and the enjoyment of the spiritual graces that they receive from the sacraments. However, the fact that more people are realizing now that Christian charity must extend beyond mere lip service into definite acceptance of the Catholic colored into parish life, should summon forth from the latter a corresponding realization that there is room for improvement in the observance of their religious duties. Perhaps the minimum service of God on the part of many of them has been one of the reasons why in the light of divine providence the process of integration has been so difficult and so long delayed.

2. *Keep appointments.* Again let it be clear that what is said here can

be taken to heart profitably by many, many Catholics regardless of race or nationality, and the point is being offered in all Christian charity.

Many priests, not only priests but school authorities and sodality officers, will have dealings with colored people for the first time, and first impressions can bode well or ill for lasting friendships. Keeping appointments would appear to be an obvious first rule in social behavior, but there are some people who apparently become so lost in their own personal thoughts and self-interests that they fail to value the time that someone else sets aside for them. The person who is left helpless at the waiting end of an appointment can be reasonably infuriated.

IT IS particularly exasperating to a priest who has set aside other pressing matters to give his advice to someone to find himself waiting vainly for the person to appear. Such incidents in my life have been a severe strain on my apostolic forbearance. If you cannot keep an appointment, take up a telephone (always there is one handy somewhere) and inform the other person of the reasons that prevent your coming. This will help to avoid any possible strained feelings.

3. *Be on time.* Second to the appointment-fouler, in degree of exasperation, is the late-comer. What more pleasant experience than to wait for fifteen to twenty minutes to half an hour for someone to keep an appointment! This holds for meetings

as well as interviews and instructions. Many a parish meeting has started with a handful present to conclude with a full attendance.

Punctuality, O glorious virtue! Blessed is the man who has it and values it. God has created all men equal and certainly he has given to each one the equal ability to be on time. There is one simple way of being on time: *give yourself plenty of time to be on time*. If the early bird gets the worm, there is many a worm enjoying a happy and perfectly safe existence.

Just as everybody should be on time for appointments, so everyone should most certainly be on time for services in church. Stand in front of the church on Sunday morning and observe the late-comers arriving at Mass in every manner and condition of hurry. There are those who are running, there are those who come with hastening foot, there come those dragging their feet, and if you wait long enough you may even see one rushing forward in the last stages of preparation, stuffing his shirt-tail into his trousers, putting the last stroke of the comb to his hair, and straightening his coat.

WHILE on the matter of Sunday Mass, may we recall that the obligation of hearing Mass on Sunday does not refer to being present for only part of the Mass but to being present for the entire Mass from beginning to end? If you arrive after the priest has started the prayers of the Mass, you are late. If your late arrival is due to your own neglect

and you miss a small part of the Mass, you are guilty of at least a venial sin. If you come so late as to miss a substantial part of the Sunday Mass (for example, the offertory, or you arrive just before the offertory — that is, after the sermon — and you leave immediately after the Communion without a sufficient reason), you are not fulfilling your Sunday obligation and you must attend another Mass on that Sunday or find yourself guilty of a mortal sin.

4. *Be generous with your parish.*

While all the points here discussed are of importance, this is one that should be weighed with especial seriousness, in view of the impression in the minds of many people: "The colored do not support their parishes." In the large parishes that have been supported exclusively by Catholic colored people you find examples of fine buildings, flourishing schools, active sodalities; but the question arises, has not this record been achieved more by the large number in the membership than by large and magnanimous contributions?

ANOTHER aspect of this generosity with regard to the parish is the payment of the tuition in school; and this point can be taken to heart by all Catholics of every group. Allowances have to be made for deserving poor, but the majority of people can easily meet the pittance that is asked in Catholic schools as tuition. Still there are those who will not pay until the priests and nuns beg and beg and remind and remind.

I fear that some take advantage of the pastor's charity in this matter. They know that in his holy zeal he will not refuse Catholic education to any of his parishioners; so they delay payment to the utmost, or simply never pay, knowing that their children will receive their education nonetheless. They find that the pastor is not like those persistent collectors coming to the door and demanding payment of a delinquent debt. They may rejoice in this fact, but they do not pay.

It is true that the income of some working people is less than that of others, but through membership in the labor unions the vast majority of people now draw very respectable pay-checks. This is evident when you take a look at the fine cars parked on the poorest streets and in front of the drabest dwellings. I do not think that anyone will deny that if just a little bit of the money spent on luxuries and amusements were diverted to the support of the parish, the ordinary Sunday contributions could easily be raised from a nickel and dime and quarter to a half-dollar and more. This advice, I repeat, applies to all Catholics. If each one would double his regular Sunday contribution, there would be little need of raffles, bingoes, dinners and festivals.

IN undertaking the presentation of these points I may have entered a field where angels fear to venture. I realize it is a delicate matter to bring up points of conduct and recommend corrections to any group of individuals. I have tried to handle it delicately. I wish to repeat again that these points can be read and applied in action by all Catholics, no matter who they may be. I have directed them to the particular attention of the Catholic colored people to tip them off on some matters that, if adopted, will aid immeasurably in bringing harmony and mutual understanding in parish and school.

Undoubtedly, some will be resentful of having these matters brought up, but they are the type of persons who will injure the process of integration more than anyone or anything else. All human beings are subject to faults, and though the faults may seemingly be as numerous as the drops in the sea on the part of those who have stood in the way of the recognition of the rights of the colored people, let not the colored feel that they have no faults to be criticized. With farsightedness they can recognize these and with wisdom strive to eliminate them toward smoothing the way for harmonious relations and peaceful living of man with man and brother with brother, as God the Father of all wishes it.

LIGUORIAN BINDERS

We have had hard-cover binders made to order for holding 12 copies of *THE LIGUORIAN* in a single volume. Anyone can insert the issues in the binder. Those who preserve their copies of *THE LIGUORIAN* for reference will find the binders very handy, with the index always at the end of the December issue. Order binders from *THE LIGUORIAN*, Liguori, Mo., at \$2.50 each.

THE BAD POPES

JOHN E. DOHERTY, C.S.S.R.

This is the second of two articles on the bad popes. The first article appeared in the March issue.

AFTER the dark ages, God's instruments for the resurrection of the faith were strong popes like the giant Hildebrand who came to be St. Gregory VII. Gregory was the pope who excommunicated the powerful Henry IV of Germany when Henry tried to force unworthy bishops on the Church. Historians love to relate how the pope made Henry do penance, barefoot, for three days outside of the castle of Countess Matilda before he would remove the excommunication.

Another pope, Innocent III would bring to his knees the treacherous English king, John, who threatened to be a Henry VIII long before Henry's time. He also made a French king take back his divorced wife and forced a Spanish ruler to give up his unlawful spouse.

No one will deny that the times cried for such popes as would call the rulers to order, make them realize a moral law above their own wills

and prevent them from corrupting the Church through their own creatures as bishops; yet the wonder is that the popes could enforce their bans and interdicts on rebellious rulers. The answer lies in the fact that the common faith had now leavened the souls of men and the popes appealed directly to the consciences of the people upon whose loyalty and obedience the kings must absolutely depend.

This leavening began with the renewed fervor of the ancient monasteries under the great St. Bernard. But these were also days of new religious orders such as the Dominicans and the Franciscans, and of saints like Dominic, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas and St. Francis Assisi who together with Bernard are among the greatest saints of all times. It was the age of knighthood and of chivalry when the faith manifested itself in wondrous ways: in the great cathedrals which rose miraculously like symphonies in stone through the common effort of the people; in the great universities which now began and in the Christian democracy which now flourished in the city states of Italy.

CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH

WHAT Pope St. Gregory and his successors brought into being was a Christian commonwealth of nations united in the same faith and obedient to Christ as their mystical King. It was not a Utopia, yet the world has a nostalgia for such a commonwealth today. It lasted till the sixteenth century when the religious wars of the Reformation made the split which is the abiding scandal of Christendom. And as strong popes had served to weld the nations in unity so now inadequate popes were one of the chief causes of disruption.

The weakening of the papacy corresponded with the rise of great national kingdoms, the expansion of trade and the discovery of the New World. Gold, wealth and luxuries brought by trading vessels from the four corners of the earth now became a new instrument of power for ambitious kings; and for the popes also, to strengthen their temporal authority and keep the Church independent of mighty monarchs.

Unfortunately this same wealth and power had corrupted some of the patrician families in Italy and in particular the Medicis and the Borgias, who now supplied candidates for the papacy. True, when these candidates became popes, they almost all acquired a strong sense of the gravity of their office.

They were also excellent administrators and many of them great scholars and leaders in the rebirth of learning known as the Renaissance. Yet as the Church rapidly approach-

ed a crisis it had need of popes with great spiritual vision — of popes who might better have been remembered as men of prayer. Instead, of the ten popes who headed the Church just before the Reformation, three were entirely unworthy even of being considered for the papacy, and the worst, Alexander VI, was a positive calamity for the Church.

Modern scholarship has toned down the more monstrous legends about this Borgia pope, and Alexander may very well be the most calumniated man in all history. But on the other hand, Pastor, the great Catholic historian of the popes affirms that the attempt to rehabilitate him is a waste of time. Elected pope the year Columbus discovered America, he sent the first missionaries to these shores. He also did many other wonderful things for the future secular history of the world. He was a man of magnificent presence and great natural gifts, almost modern in his mentality, and he is still esteemed by the Jews as their great protector when Renaissance kings sought to liquidate them.

BUT the fact remains that his personal life was vitiated and his career would shock the narrator were he only a secular prince. But he was a pope. Doubtless, the worst things in his pontificate were all the deeds of a son, Caesar Borgia, one of the most notorious scoundrels of all history; but both Caesar and his sister Lucretia were born to Alexander after he was a priest and even a cardinal. Under such a poor churchman papal prestige cracked and crumbled.

When Leo X became pope his enemies quote him as saying: "God has given us the papacy; now let us enjoy it."

Even if the quotation were true it would not justly characterize Leo who was not a bad pope; yet he had no conception at all of the needs of the Church at the time of the Reformation, and it was unfortunate that he was the one to deal with Martin Luther. Had Pius V been pope when Luther challenged the Church, there would never have been a Protestant Reformation. Pius was a saint and one of the typical reform popes who headed the Church after the revolt broke out.

The title of reformer is usually given to the Protestant leaders like Calvin and the German ex-monk, Luther, but they were not really reformers unless to reform means "to throw out the baby with the bath." Pius and the other popes at this time demonstrated what it is to be a reformer in the Church. Some of them were monks and extremely severe, but under them it is said that Rome itself became like a huge monastery.

The discipline they enforced is still felt throughout the Church and their reform was far from being merely external as can be seen from the striking display of the Church's unquenchable spiritual vitality in the movement of St. Philip Neri at Rome, in the Carmelite revival under St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross and St. Peter of Alcantara in Spain, in the martyrdoms of St. Thomas More, St. John Fisher and the Carthusian martyrs in England, and in the missionary zeal

of St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier and St. Peter Canisius spreading out from the University of Paris to the ends of the earth.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

ONE of the chief means of fortifying the Church during these fateful days was the council of all the bishops of the Catholic world summoned by the pope to the city of Trent in Italy. By defining and clarifying the traditional faith and discipline this council would make the Church strong against attack, for during the next centuries the popes would captain the Church in a state of siege. This attack would come not only from Protestants but from so-called Catholic kings. Indeed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the kings who often considered themselves more Catholic than the pope were really infected with heresy, for they ruled absolutely with a theory that they were the supreme arbiters of the faith in their own realms and that the religion of any country must be the same as that of its rulers.

Some kings, disregarding the admonitions of the popes, persecuted Protestants with a cruelty and severity foreign to the spirit of the Church. Others, like Henry VIII of England, left the Church and took whole nations with them. But the greatest king at this time was the Sun-king, Louis XIV, who as ruler of France in his absolutism and spirit of nationalism was typical of the kings of his time. Louis not only insisted on appointing bishops and dominating the Church in his domain but he also fostered

disloyalty to the Holy See, and it was under him that a kind of Protestantism called Jansenism spread.

These kings literally drove the popes into the sacristy; but the pontiffs were good and tactful if not great men while Innocent XI was characterized by eminent sanctity. It was Innocent who entered into the struggle with Louis and proved how difficult can be the application of Christ's own principle: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

There was a real battle all during Innocent's pontificate between the pope and the French ruler and there was constant danger that Louis like Henry of England would break away from the Church; but Innocent, though with great patience and meekness, refused to concede to him any of the rights of conscience, of God, of the Church or of the faith.

MISSIONS IN THE NEW WORLD

MEANWHILE the militant fervor of the faith was expressing itself in the phenomenally successful missions of the Jesuits and Franciscans, not only in the New World but in India, China, Japan and Russia. There now arose a whole galaxy of saints who would leave a permanent mark on the Church, some of them in the very countries where the fight between kings and the Holy See was most intense. The most influential in France were St. Francis de Sales, St. John Eudes, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac and St. Margaret Mary Alacoque; and, in Italy, St. Paul of the Cross,

St. Leonard of Port Maurice and the Church's great champion against the effects of Jansenism, St. Alphonsus Liguori.

MODERN POPES

AS the popes of the modern era came on the scene they saw the kings depart. These popes, Pius IX, Leo X, Pius X, Benedict XV and Pius XI, were all men extraordinarily gifted in qualities of heart as well as of mind, which would enable them to go directly to the problems of the faithful. One of them, Pius X, now canonized as a saint, was literally and in every sense a pope of the poor.

This era begins with the year 1870, for it was then that the bishops of the Catholic world again met and defined once and for all what is meant by the infallibility of the pope. In the same year Italian nationalists under King Emmanuel II snatched away the temporal possessions of the popes. Both of these events, in a wholly unforeseen way, have contributed to what is probably the most important fact in modern Church history. That is that the popes today, while having the merest semblance of temporal power, rule with a moral authority equal to if not greater than that of any popes since Gregory the Great.

In an era of democracy, moreover, these popes have proved paradoxical that the Church is more democratic than the governments that pride themselves on being democracies. For the power and authority of the popes today is clearly seen as resting

solely on the faith and consciences of the ordinary faithful.

At the end of the last war the Big Three met to lay down peace plans at Yalta. At that time it was suggested that the pope's counsel should be sought. But Stalin, the Communist dictator, answered: "How many legions has he got?"

Many inside and outside the Church today are convinced that on the answer to that question may depend the survival of our civilization. What is certain is that a large portion of Christianity looks to the Holy Father today, as in every other great crisis of civilization, to point out the way of Christ against injustice, good against evil, faith against infidelity.

Because of modern methods of travel and communication people today are able to scrutinize the waking hours of this pope as no other pope has been studied in all history. Pope Pius XII is the 263rd pope. Eighty-three popes are venerated as saints and eight more are on the way to sainthood. To the faithful at large Pope Pius sums up in his person all the popes that have ruled the Church in the past, for all who meet him are struck at once not only by his saintly qualities, but by his faith, his gentleness, his kindness and not least by his obvious human qualities.

SCANDAL IN THE CHURCH

YET some will object that it presents no difficulty to them that the popes should be human but that some of them, although admittedly few, should have been so bad. How can the Church claim to be divine,

they ask, when it has had popes whose lives cannot fail to scandalize even Catholics themselves? But it is no part of a Catholic's faith that his life in the Church should be exempt from such scandal. On the contrary Christ Himself says: "Woe to the world because of scandals. It must needs be that scandals come, nevertheless woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh."

In his great work written more than 1500 years ago St. Augustine describes the Church as the "City of God" and, speaking of the scandals that must exist in it, he quotes the Apostle Paul: "Whoever will live piously in Christ shall suffer persecution." But this persecution he understands not only as afflictions by heretics and others from without but even as scandal from within.

That this testing of faith may come even from the most highly placed members of the Church is testified to by Pope Pius XII, our present Holy Father. For he writes that the evident signs of the condition of our human weakness in the Church itself should not be attributed to the constitution of the Church but "rather to the tragic leaning toward evil on the part of the individual which her divine Founder suffered from even in the most highly-placed members of His mystical body, with the aim of testing his sheep and causing the merits of Christian faith to grow in all."

The words of the Holy Father are from His momentous encyclical on the *Mystical Body* in which he out-

lines the doctrine so clear in Scripture that the members of the Church are mystically identified as Christ's own body. In the eyes of Catholics, unworthy popes are thus seen as but an extension of the mystery of the Incarnation. The great scandal to all who cannot accept the faith of Jesus Christ has always been this fundamental truth staggering to the reason of man that God Himself has assumed the weaknesses of human nature. Christ asked His contemporaries, "Does this scandalize you?" Yet so great was the scandal that they crucified Him as a blasphemer; and when they saw Him bowed down in weakness even to the death agony they were certain that they had been vindicated. Still, it is upon this truth that the Christian faith rests and to those who accept the divinity of Christ it should be no problem to find human weakness in the members of His Church with whom He has mystically identified Himself and into which He has invited all sinners to enter.

TESTIMONY OF WITNESSES

IS God's arm so shortened that He cannot preserve and guide His Church even when His most highly placed members betray this "tragic leaning to evil?" The history of the popes is an answer.

A noted Jewish historian entered the Church after reading the lives of the popes and he wrote thus: "If the Church could have been preserved for more than 1900 years under the leadership of popes who are so manifestly human, then it clearly must be divine."

On the other hand, while it is certain that no one can begin to understand the Church without faith in its divine Founder, an unbiased history of the popes in which the unworthy popes appear in their perspective with the long line of saintly pontiffs gives a strong suasion for this belief. Since in this article we have dwelt at length on the subject of bad popes let us therefore conclude with the observation of Thomas Babington Macauley. Lord Macauley, one of the great writers of all time in the English language, did not have the faith that could give him any real understanding of the Church of the popes; nevertheless in his essay on the Catholic Church he writes:

"There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when leopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of supreme pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern

when compared with the papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the papacy remains. The papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with St. Augustine and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul."

Being rushed is not a virtue in itself, it is merely a sign of bad management. The art of living consists not in stuffing the day as full as possible, but in getting through the day with a sense of achievement, of enjoyment, and without excessive fatigue.

Information

MUCH THUNDER OVER NOTHING

Etiquette is an important thing in the nation's capital city. The question of precedence at White House functions in Washington is sometimes annoying. A socially prominent woman actively interested in those doings at one time stirred up a considerable rumpus over this question and the newspapers all over the country had considerable to say about it. So did many private citizens. Of all the comments on the situation, that of an Indian chief of Glacier Park, Montana, was easily the most picturesque. He said:

"These white squaws make much thunder over nothing. One is third, one wants second. Tell them to go into the wigwam and sit in a circle, then no first, no last. Thunder dies and braves can sleep."

Father J. S. Brockmeier

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NO SALE!

Mr. Thomas Walsh is not only the owner of Chicago's Walnut Hills Golf Club but a frank, outspoken Catholic. When a client came to rent the club for an evening, Mr. Walsh, as always, checked through the menu and the type of entertainment planned. With a shake of his head he regretted that he couldn't rent it.

"The Boss wouldn't like the type of show you're planning," he said.

"Hey!" protested the rejected client, "I thought you owned this club."

"I'm just the manager," replied Mr. Walsh. He pointed to a crucifix on the office wall.

"There's the Boss; and we don't rent the club unless the guests keep their entertainment within His law."

Father F. Krause

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Palm Sunday

The important news to be commented on at this time is the news of Holy Week.

Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week, is rich in two things: in the memory of one memorable deed that the beneficiaries of Our Lord's miracles and teachings did for Him, namely, receiving Him as He came into Jerusalem with loud cheers and protestations of love and devotion; and in the lessons that the day imparts to all aspirants after fame and power, namely, the fickleness of human regard and the frailty of human success.

Our Lord's case was like that of the man who is feted on Fifth Avenue with the ticker tape treatment on Sunday and on the following Friday is publicly executed before thousands of cheering people at Times Square.

Of course, His case was an extreme case — one day clinging to a star, and hardly a week later, hanging on a cross. Probably it had to be extreme to teach the proper lesson to those of the future who would put all the emphasis of their life on "getting ahead" and being famous, whether in the movies or in the bus-

iness world or in athletics or just within the tiny circle of the neighborhood or relationship.

The deception of the devil would be so great in blinding people to the meaning of real values and to the fragile structure of all things purely earthly that only a drastic enactment of what happens to fame and fortune would remove the scales of blindness from their eyes and make them understand that fame and high position are things to be feared rather than things to be desired and nourished in the heart and mourned over when lost.

Many people have committed suicide when they lost their crown. Many others have become sour and cynical and bitter. They had come to think that they had an inalienable right to their position of power and to the praise and applause of the populace. When these things were taken away, they could not adjust themselves to the fact that they were just ordinary human beings, and that all they possessed before was but an accretion to a nature that like all other natures was fallen and quite finite.

Palm Sunday is the time for all who tend towards ambition to med-

itate well on what happened to our Lord. The very same thing can happen to them. Let them be as well prepared as our Lord was when the palms gave way to the cross.

Holy Thursday

Holy Thursday is the second great day of Holy Week.

Many people are afraid to die. This is not because they dread going into the ground and having the worms consume their body. They know that they will not feel what happens to their body in view of the fact that after death the body is nothing more than a chemical composition, without life or consciousness or feeling of any kind.

They are afraid to die because of what may happen to their soul. They believe in hell. They know that it is quite possible for even a person baptized in the faith to go to hell. They are fully aware of the sins they have committed. So, even though they confessed their sins in sorrow and received the absolution of the priest, they still tremble and are filled with fear. Will their souls go to heaven?

Yes, absolutely their souls will go to heaven, if our Lord is to be believed in the words that He enunciated in preparation for the tremendous deed that He was to perform on Holy Thursday, namely, the institution of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, which is, as all Catholics believe, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, truly present on the altar under the appearances of bread and wine.

Our Lord said, "If any man eat My body and drink My blood, that man shall have life everlasting." Then on Holy Thursday He gave His priests the power to work the miracle of transubstantiation, so that His body and blood would easily be available to all the people of the world until the end of time.

What greater assurance can a man have about his going to heaven than God's own words? If a man wants to be sure that he is on the road to heaven, let him receive Holy Communion with faith, with fervor and with frequency. If he does that, as sure as our Lord made the promise to take care of such people, that man will one day know the happiness of heaven.

Holy Thursday is important because it is the day on which our Lord decided to stay on earth so that it would be easier for His children to go to heaven. It is a day that should be most sacred to all people of even the most meagre faith and religion. But especially should the day be sacred to those people who are afraid that they are not going to find themselves in heaven after they die.

To Calvary with Christ

An almost universal feature of Catholic churches in all parts of the world is the presence of fourteen pictures hanging evenly spaced on the interior walls. A study of these pictures by the casual observer would reveal that they all portray our Saviour in various phases of His passion and death on the cross.

These pictures taken all together comprise what is known as the way of the cross or the stations of the cross, and to "make the stations" for a Catholic means to meditate briefly on the subject of each picture, thus uniting oneself with the sufferings of Christ. Particularly during the season of Lent, it is the custom in most parish churches for the faithful to gather once or twice a week to make the stations publicly, the priest leading the prayers, and the people answering.

Our purpose here is not only to explain, but to encourage. We would like to encourage our Catholic people to make the stations not only publicly, but privately, and not only during the season of Lent, but during the entire year.

No more rewarding private devotion can be found than this, nor none more highly indulged. It offers moreover the opportunity for a short but salutary meditation on a subject which, according to the saints, must be kept before the mind's eye if we are to persevere in God's grace amid the trials and temptations of life.

No special formula of prayer need be used in making the stations. With the help of a prayer-book, or without it, one need only pass from station to station, pausing a short while before each picture while pondering on the scene it represents. The whole journey can be accomplished within a matter of a few moments. A person might stop in the church on the way home from work, or, if feasible, at some time during

the quiet hours of the day, and find renewed strength in this beautiful and ancient devotion.

Even the sick and shut-ins can make the way of the cross in their own way at home, by holding in their hands a specially blessed cross and saying 20 Our Fathers, Hail Marys and Glory be to the Fathers, while meditating on Christ's passion.

To all, whether sick or well, the devotion of the way of the cross is heartily commended as a wonderful means of growing in the love of Christ, Who suffered so greatly for us in order to prove His love.

Early Education

It is almost a truism to say that parents have a responsibility to begin instructing their children at an early age in the teachings and practices of their faith.

That a considerable number are failing in their duty seems clear from a survey brought to our attention by the *Florida Catholic*. This survey involved about 16,000 first grade children from 33 different states and had to do with their religious background. It was found that:

1. Almost 50 per cent of the Catholic children could not make the sign of the cross;
2. Over 75 per cent could not recite the Our Father;
3. Nearly 70 per cent did not know the Hail Mary;
4. Scarcely any had the basic notions concerning the story of creation, the fall of our first parents, the true meaning of Christmas and other similar truths of the faith.

We agree wholeheartedly with the editor of the Florida *Catholic* that if parents allow the first five or six years to go by without making a real effort to teach at least some of the fundamentals of their religious beliefs to their children, a real tragedy has occurred, one that no amount of formal education can properly rectify. Child psychologists are agreed that the very early years preceding school are the most decisive for the development of character. They stress that the basic pattern of character is formed by the time the child is five.

While the child's character is being molded by wise discipline and warm love, certainly the parents should develop religious motivation in the child's mind. It should be taught simple habits of prayer; it should be told of the love of Christ and the providence of God and the affection of God's mother. Parents who fail in this duty may live to regret it. For, as Pope Pius XII has said: "If you do not educate the child, he will begin, for good or ill, to educate himself."

Code of Medical Ethics

Of interest, perhaps, to the general public, and not often seen in popular journals, is the so-called Hippocratic Oath, taken by doctors on being admitted into the medical fraternity. Hippocrates was a Greek doctor who lived long before the time of Christ, and who is revered as a pioneer in the noble profession of medicine.

The oath ascribed to him also possesses considerable nobility. Here it is, in its Geneva version, as adopted by the World Medical Association, comprising 39 national medical societies, including our own American Medical Association.

"Now being admitted to the profession of medicine, I solemnly pledge to consecrate my life to the service of humanity. I will give respect and gratitude to my deserving teachers. I will practice medicine with conscience and dignity. The health and life of my patient will be my first consideration. I will hold in confidence all that my patient confides in me.

"I will maintain the honor and the noble traditions of the medical profession. My colleagues will be as my brothers. I will not permit consideration of race, religion, nationality, party politics or social standing to intervene between my duty and my patient. I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the time of its conception. Even under threat, I will not use my knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity.

"These promises I make freely and upon my honor."

There is much food for thought in this declaration. The well-known code of medical ethics which all Catholic hospitals bind themselves to observe might be considered as a commentary and elaboration of the Hippocratic oath in the light of Christian revelation.

We are indebted for this version to the interesting *Linacre Quarterly*, official journal of the national federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds.

LIGUORIANA

Low Sunday — April 28

The Occasions of Sin

By St. Alphonsus

Selected and Edited by

John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R.

THIS Sunday's Gospel narrates the incident of our Lord's entering the house in which the apostles were assembled after His resurrection. The doors of the house were all closed and bolted and yet there He stood in the midst of them. St. Thomas says that the mystical meaning of this miracle is, that the Lord does not enter into our souls unless we keep the doors of the senses shut. If, then, we wish Jesus Christ to dwell within us, we must keep the doors of our senses closed against dangerous occasions of sin. I ask you to reflect briefly upon the great danger to which those who do not avoid the dangers of sin expose themselves.

As a consequence of original sin, all have an inclination to do what is forbidden. St. Paul, for instance, complained that he experienced in himself a law opposed to reason: "I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin." When a dangerous occasion of sin is

present, it violently excites our corrupt desires. It then becomes very difficult to resist it, for God withholds efficacious helps from those who voluntarily expose themselves to the occasion of sin. *He that loveth danger shall perish in it.*

St. Peter says that *the devil goes about seeking whom he may devour.* He constantly seeks to enter and take possession of our souls. He seeks to place before us the occasions of sin by which he may enter the soul. And when the soul yields to the suggestions of the devil, and exposes itself to the occasions of sin, he easily enters and devours it.

The ruin of our first parents can be ascribed to their not flying from the occasions of sin. God had forbidden them not only to eat, but even to touch the forbidden fruit. But Eve saw, took, and ate it. She first looked at it, then took it into her hands, and afterwards ate it. This is what ordinarily happens to all who expose themselves to the occasions of sin.

THE devil was once compelled in an exorcism to tell the sermon which displeased him most. He confessed that it was the sermon on avoiding the occasions of sin. As long as we expose ourselves to the occa-

sions of sin, the devil laughs at all our good purposes and promises made to God. His greatest care is directed to inducing us to think little of evil occasions. For these occasions are like a veil placed before the eyes, preventing us from seeing either the lights received from God, or the eternal truths, or the resolutions which we have made. In a word, they make us forget everything, and, as it were, force us into sin.

The devil is always careful to suggest pretexts to us which would lead us to the conclusion that certain occasions to which we expose ourselves are not voluntary, but necessary. For when the occasion in which we are placed is really necessary, the Lord always helps us to avoid sin. But we sometimes imagine certain necessities which are not sufficient to excuse us. No one, says St. Cyprian, can be secure of his treasure if he harbors a thief in his house. Nor can a lamb be sure of its life if it remain in the den of a wolf. Nor can the soul be secure of the treasure of divine grace, if it is resolved to continue the occasion of sin.

St. James teaches that every man has within himself a powerful enemy, his own evil inclinations, tempting him to sin. *Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence.* If we do not, therefore, fly from external occasions, how can we resist a temptation and avoid sin? We should always place before our eyes the general remedy which Jesus has prescribed for conquering temptations and saving our souls. *If your right eye scan-*

dalizes you, pluck it out and cast it from you.

The devil does not endeavor immediately to enslave souls in mortal sin, for they would be alarmed at the thought of committing mortal sin and would fly from it with horror. No, he endeavors to bind them by a single thread, so as not to excite too much fear. By this means he will succeed more easily in strengthening the bonds until he makes them his slaves. He, therefore, who wishes to be free from the danger of being the slave of hell must break even the slight threads which would bind him. That is, he must avoid all occasions of sin.

For those who have had a habit of impurity, however, it will not be enough to avoid the immediate occasions of sin. If they do not fly from even remote occasions, they will very easily relapse into their former sins. To escape defeat in this struggle, a great grace of God is necessary. And to render ourselves worthy of this grace, we must avoid the occasions of sin. To practice the virtue of chastity, it is necessary to recommend ourselves continually to God. Of ourselves we have not the strength to preserve it. That strength must be a gift from God.

ST. Philip Neri used to say that in the war against the vice of impurity, the victory is gained by cowards: that is, by those who fly from the occasions of sin. But the man who exposes himself to it, arms his flesh and renders it so powerful that it will be morally impossible for him to resist its attacks.

St. John Chrysostom once said that it is as foolish for a man to expose himself to the occasion of sin and to hope to preserve the virtue of purity, as to expect that hay, into which a torch has been thrown, will not catch fire. Not to be burned in such circumstances would be a miracle. Going a step further, St. Bernard teaches that to preserve chastity, and, at the same time, to expose oneself to the proximate occasion of sin, "is a greater miracle than to raise a dead man to life."

It is foolish to trust in one's own strength in the face of such occasions, for such strength is like wax placed near a fire. Some, too, would trust in the change that has taken place in their life, in their confessions, in the promises they have made to God. But occasions of sin make no discrimination in their attacks. Even the most saintly souls must guard against exposing themselves to them.

This example may seem to be extreme, but the history of the Church records it. In the early history of the Church a holy woman, who employed herself in the pious office of burying martyrs, once found among them one who was not as yet dead. She brought him to her own house, procured a physician and medicine for him, until he recovered. But what happened? These two saints (well they might have been called such, for one was on the point of martyrdom, the other devoting her life to works of mercy) first fell into sin and lost the grace of God. Then being made weaker by sin, they afterwards denied the faith.

April, 1957

IT is not enough, therefore, to fly from sin, but we must also flee from the occasions of sin. That is, from any house, from any conversation, from any person that would lead us to sin. Far better is it to suffer a temporal loss, than to lose your soul and your God. In whatever regards chastity we must be persuaded that too great caution can never be exercised. If we wish to save our souls from sin and hell, we must always fear and tremble. *With fear and trembling work out your salvation.*

He who is not fearful, but who exposes himself to occasions of sin, will hardly be saved. Frequently during the day we should repeat the petition of the *Our Father* — "and lead us not into temptation." Lord, do not permit me to be attacked by those temptations which would deprive me of your grace. It is true, that we cannot merit the grace of perseverance. But, according to St. Augustine, God grants it to everyone that asks. For He has promised to hear all who pray to Him. Hence, the holy doctor says, that the Lord "by His promises has made Himself our debtor."



In a certain business establishment signs were posted on every wall, bearing the single imperative word, "THINK!"

Apparently the experiment in initiative didn't work out too well. A few weeks later, new signs replaced the old ones. They read: "DON'T think! ASK!"

Quote



BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Tobin, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in THE LIGUORIAN be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may write to THE LIGUORIAN for further information.

Much Ado About Me

Fred Allen

In his earlier book, *Treadmill to Oblivion*, Fred Allen told the story of his radio days; in his last book, *Much Ado About Me* he recalls his earlier years in vaudeville. He begins with the not too happy home life, due to his mother's death and his father's bouts with alcohol, and scenes from his youthful days in Boston. After a series of minor triumphs on amateur night programs he went into small-time vaudeville and after several false starts made the jump to the big time and to the Palace. A book that does bring back to an older generation a form of entertainment that has all but died, but of which some remnants do live in another form on television. A witty tale with the facile barb that was part of the wit of Fred Allen. Not by any means a great book, nor a vastly entertaining one, but one that has brief flashes of satire.

(Little, Brown and Co., \$5.00)

Rain For These Roots

Michael J. Cox, M.S.

The title for this book is taken from a line by G. Manley Hopkins: "O Thou, Lord of life, send my roots rain." The purpose of the author is to show the concern of Mary for the plight of her children and to send them heavenly rain at La Salette, Lourdes and Fatima. He stresses the similarity of messages: prayer and penance to atone to God for the sins of man. The last chapter shows Mary in her great role in the modern world as reconciler between her human children and her divine Child. Another worthwhile book on Mary.

(Bruce, \$3.75)

Sermon Plans

Canon Howe

One of the best books of sermon outlines ever printed in the English language is now back in print. **Sermon Plans** gives four sketches of sermons for every Sunday of the year, two on the epistles and two on the gospels. The plans are so full that there is no difficulty in selecting suitable material; there are many scriptural texts under the various points. This book, written in 1903, still serves a very practical purpose. Priests who know the author's other and even more popular, **The Catechist**, will welcome this reprint.

(Templegate, \$4.00)

Bethlehem

The Foot of the Cross

Father Frederick Faber, D.D.

Previous generations valued the spiritual books of Father Faber, the contemporary and confrere of Cardinal Newman. But many of his books have long been out of print. Now two of his better-known books have been reissued.

Bethlehem consists of reflections upon the early years of Christ. The 432 pages of this book present pious material on many of the aspects of the Divine Word's life in the intimacy of the Trinity, in the womb of Mary and on earth. He has an especially good chapter on the various early worshippers of Christ. A long book filled with many devotional thoughts.

The Foot of the Cross is subtitled, **The Sorrows of Mary**. The three sections consider her sorrows in general, then each sorrow in particular, and some considerations on the compassion of Mary. Again another fine sampling of the work of Faber. Modern readers might easily consider Faber prolix, but there is a wealth of material for one who has the patience to bear with him.

(Peter Reilly, \$3.95 each)

Lord, That I May See

Dr. N. G. M. Van Doornik

This book by the experienced convert-maker has a two-fold purpose: 1. to intensify the knowledge of the faith of Catholics; 2. to help instruct a non-Catholic who is looking for the truth about the Catholic Church. The three divisions cover the basic truths of belief and action: 1. The foundation of the Kingdom; 2. The Kingdom on Earth; 3. The Kingdom in Heaven. Prospective converts will find it useful as supplementary reading for the catechism. Cradle Catholics will refresh their memories as well as deepen their knowledge of the faith.

(Herder, \$2.75)

Valiant Woman

Edited by Peg Boland

Loretta Young highlights the theme and the inspiration of this book in the foreword which she contributes. "These stories are true. Now I know what valiant means. I've walked, through these pages, with the brave ones. . . . In this book you are inspired by the bright and shining courage of its valiant company. Few of us have been so tested—or ever will be. But all of us will do well to remember that their source of valor is ever available to each of us—that those with even the smallest gift of faith can make that gift grow."

In the pages of this book fifteen Catholic women, most of whom are members of St. Ann's Study Club in South Bend, and many whose husbands are teachers at Notre Dame, tell the story of the influence of faith in their life. Faith to these women is a strong arm that enables them to live with courage in the midst of sufferings and crosses. What a galaxy of valiant women are met! Mary Agnes Boyle, victim of cancer; Angela Tobia Hamill, mother of a mongoloid daughter; Dorothy Stoddard Riordan, widowed mother of nine children; Jo Geissler, dedicated to her task as a mother of a large family despite the remarks and criticisms of others. The other eleven women are equally well worth knowing. Mothers will especially be inspired by the words of these valiant women. An unusual book that is highly recommended. The reader will feel better for having come into such close contact with women who live by their faith.

(Grail Publications, \$2.50)

Hearts Shall be Enlightened Mother Mary Aloysi, S.N.D.

The popular spiritual writer Mother Mary Aloysi offers a new work to religious. The forty reflections are an aid to the religious in the examination of conscience especially on retreat days.

(Pustet, \$2.50)

Cartoon Key to Heaven

Robert J. Schubert

One of the professors at St. Francis Minor Seminary in Milwaukee has issued a clever book of cartoons that illustrate and explain the fundamentals of Apologetics. In pointed sketches, with clear text, the basic reasons for the existence of God, the divinity of Christ and the truth of the Church are well explained. Recommended to the non-Catholic, the convert as well as the cradle Catholic.

(St. Francis Seminary, \$.75)

True Christmas Spirit

Rev. Edward J. Sutfin

This book grew out of the need of educators for help in bringing the **True Christmas Spirit** into the lives of the children. It is based upon the liturgy and the folk lore that the peoples of Europe built around the liturgy. Many of these traditions have been abandoned by the American descendants of these people. A very interesting and informative book that covers Advent, Christmas and other feasts of the Christmas Cycle.

(Grail Publications, \$3.00)

Tales of the Long Bow

G. K. Chesterton

This is one of the titles in the new Chesterton series of reprints of the books of the great English Catholic essayist, poet, novelist, philosopher and theologian. The present book is one of G. K. C.'s fantastic novels with a pointed purpose; in this case, a violent protest in favor of the individual man in an age of conformity. Like most of Chesterton's work this novel has great meaning for our modern life.

(Sheed and Ward, \$3.00)

Three Days to Eternity

Richard Reid
Edward J. Moffett

"His name was Cairns.
His address, China.
His profession, Apostle.
His triumph, Martyrdom.
His grave, the China Sea."

This is the dramatic introduction to the life story of Father Robert Cairns, Maryknoll missionary in China who was put to death by the Japanese shortly after Pearl Harbor. The title, **Three Days to Eternity** is explained by the authors: "It's the seventy-two hours in which the memories of a man's life crowd in upon him, before he, the good shepherd, lays down his life for his sheep. It's the story of the three days before Father Robert J. Cairns began his eternity — the triduum of his Gethsemane, his journey to Calvary, and his crucifixion."

In a series of flashbacks the principal details of Father Cairns' life are presented. The appendix gives an account of his student days, as well as excerpts from his writings while in China. A well-written sketch of a modern apostle.

(Newman Press, \$2.50)

LUCID \ / INTERVALS



In a home without a maid and seldom with a guest, the young son was very anxious to help his mother when his father appeared with two dinner guests. When the dinner was nearly over, the child went to the kitchen and proudly carried in the first piece of pie, giving it to his father, who passed it to a guest. The boy came in with a second piece and gave it to his father, who gave it to the other guest. That was too much for the youngster, and he piped up:

"It ain't no use, Pop! The pieces are all the same size."

A rather puny individual was telling his friends in the office about the muscle-building course he was taking.

"I've been taking it for three years now," he said. "Every week the mailman has been bringing me heavier weights and heavier equipment."

"But," commented one of his friends, "you don't seem to be any huskier than you were three years ago."

"No," said the little man. "But you ought to see my mailman!"

An optimist is a middle-aged guy who believes that the cleaner is shrinking the waistband of his trousers.

A four-year-old youngster had gotten a terrible sunburn and it was beginning to peel. One day his mother heard him muttering to himself as he washed his face: "Only four years old and wearing out already."

If Adam came back to earth, the only thing he would recognize would be the jokes.

A woman with a newly developed interest in government wrote to the editor of a big newspaper: "I want to get into politics. Do the taxpayers have a party?"

The editor answered her letter, writing: "Very seldom, lady, very seldom."

Once upon a time a worried-looking man entered a flower shop and asked for six potted geraniums.

"Sorry," replied the clerk, "but we're out of geraniums just now. How about some nice potted chrysanthemums?"

"Oh, no. I'm afraid they won't do," countered the man. "I promised my wife I'd water her geraniums while she was away."

The village blacksmith hired an apprentice and immediately began his instructions: "When I take the shoe out of the fire, I'll lay it on the anvil; and when I nod my head, you hit it with the hammer."

The apprentice did just as he was told. Now he's the village blacksmith.

A tourist walked up to an Indian in New Mexico one day.

"How!" he said. "White man hope-um red man feel-um heap good this morning. Ugh!"

The Indian stuck his head inside his house and shouted:

"Hey, Kate, come and get a load of this guy, will ya?"

"She is a woman who has suffered a great deal for her belief."

"Indeed? And what is her belief?"

"She believes that she can wear a number five shoe on a number seven foot."

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

HEADLINERS

(Number in parenthesis refers to classification according to rating used in general list.)

Peyton Place (IV)—*Metalious*
 Don't Go Near the Water (IV)—*Brinkley*
 The Tribe That Lost Its Head (IIb)
Monsarrat
 The Fountain Overflows (I)—*West*
 Auntie Mame (IIa)—*Dennis*
 Compulsion (III)—*Levin*
 King of Paris (IIb)—*Endore*
 The Last Hurrah (IIa)—*O'Connor*
 Jericho's Daughters (IIb)—*Wellman*
 The Loving Couple (IIa)—*Rowans*
 These Thousand Hills (III)—*Guthrie*
 Anglo-Saxon Attitudes (IIb)—*Wilson*
 The Success (IIb)—*Howe*

I. Suitable for general reading:

Fall Over Cliff—*Bell*
 Bite the Hand—*Fenison*
 Bon Voyage—*Hayes*
 As I Pass, O Manhattan—*McCullough*
 Father Juniper and the General—*Norman*
 Disaster at Dundee—*Prebble*
 The Fur Person—*Sarton*
 Danger Under the Moon—*Walsh*
 The Fountain Overflows—*West*
 The F. B. I. Story—*Whitehead*
 Santee Paradise—*Rutledge*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:
 The Greatness of Woodrow Wilson—*Alsop*
 The Embattled—*Artajo*
 Mental Health in Childhood—*Burns*
 The Bernal Diaz Chronicle—*Idell*
 Death of a Fool—*Marsh*

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union—*Meissner*

The Sound of Silence—*Rickwood*
 American Youth in Trouble—*Rische*
 Thirty Years a Watch-Tower Slave—*Schnell*

The Maid of Orleans—*Stolpe*
 Day After Tomorrow—*Turkel*
 The Proving Flight—*Beuty*
 Ready for the Plaintiff—*Belli*
 The Tiger Among Us—*Brckett*
 The Seven Caves—*Coon*
 The Threshing Floor—*Coyne*
 The Conquistadors—*Descola*
 A Light for Fools—*Ginzburg*
 Blondes, Brunettes and Bullets—*Granlund*

The Assassin—*Jepson*
 The Wild Swan—*Kennedy*
 Till We Have Faces—*Lewis*
 Patrick J. Hurley—*Lohbeck*
 The Silent Life—*Merton*
 The Walls Came Tumbling Down—*Roosenburg*
 The Whole Voyaid—*Saroyan*
 First and Last Love—*Sheean*

B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however invalidate the book as a whole:

Tower in the West—*Norris*
 Reprieve: The Testament of John Resko—*Resko*
 The Etruscan—*Waltari*
 Off Limits—*Habe*
 The Green Kingdom—*Maddux*
 The Philadelphian—*Powell*
 The Last Parallel—*Russ*

III. Permissible for the discriminating adult:

Home Before Dark—*Bassing*

IV. Not recommended to any reader:

The Lost Steps—*Carpentier*
 Peyton Place—*Metalious*

"I DON'T SEE WHY..."

The above words are a standard introduction to many statements made by both Catholics and non-Catholics concerning moral and religious teachings of the Catholic Church. For example:

I don't see why the Catholic Church objects to marriage between two people who have different religious beliefs.

I don't see why the Catholic Church continues to maintain her old-fashioned stand on the sinfulness of birth-control.

I don't see why, if my wife or husband turns out to be a yoke around my neck, the Church won't let me get a divorce and marry somebody else.

I don't see why I, as a Catholic, should have to sacrifice some of my hard-won earnings to send my children to a Catholic school, when it is cheaper to send them elsewhere.

These and many other "Whys" are important. Often it takes a bit of thinking and study to know the proper answers to them. Surely no one should undertake to answer them at a glance, as they do who start out, "I don't see why"

THE LIGUORIAN is constantly presenting the evidence and reasoning and teachings of Christ on which the answers to any "Why?" must be based. Read it regularly so that you may be able to say, like the distinguished convert, Arnold Lunn, "Now I see."

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